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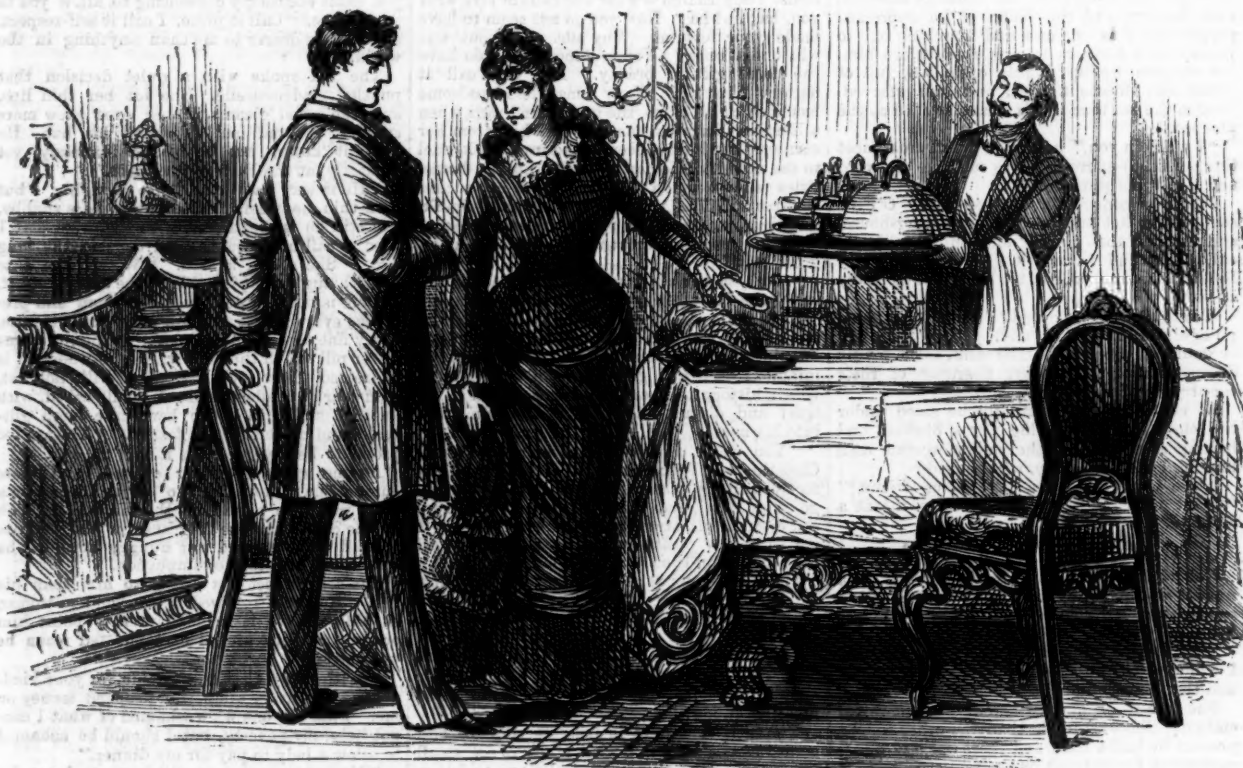
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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[AN UNWILLING GUEST.]

CHRISTINE'S REVENGE;

OR,

O'HARA'S WIFE.

CHAPTER III.

There are sounds in air, on earth,
That have mystery for their birth.

ROLAND had brought out some whiskey in a bottle, a couple of coarse tumblers, some loaf sugar in a paper bag, and a metal spoon. He placed these on the rickety table, gave the two old cane chairs the room contained to his visitors, and then he placed a jar of cold water at their service, and a roll of tobacco.

Soon pipes were lighted, and the fumes filled the poor attic. Roland smoked also, but he only drank some cold tea which he brought out of the cupboard in a little stout earthenware teapot.

He had no chair, so he sat on the side of his narrow bed and listened gloomily to the talk and the plans of his friends: O'Flynn the stout man, and Charlie Sullivan the pale youth with lank hair were what the world would call Irish adventurers, stirrers up of strife and discontent among their fellow-countrymen.

O'Flynn's brother had been evicted from his farm in the county of Donegal. Our acquaintance was the youngest of three brothers, he had in reality run off to America seventeen years before, and had returned to find his brothers gone, and strangers, with "capital," working the lands.

Sullivan had seen his mother and young brothers literally die for want of necessities during a hard winter, when fever came to aid the murderous attacks of famine. His father became insane through grief, and was shut up in a dreary county madhouse.

Charles, intelligent beyond the average, came over to England burning with the sense of wrong. He was a rebel of rebels, with placid exterior and quiet manners, but he cherished the most daring schemes. He was in reality brave as a lion, reckless with sorrow. "Better death than oppression," he would say.

These dangerous men had made the acquaintance of Roland O'Hara, and were leading him along a path where any step might precipitate him into an abyss where death and destruction waited for their prey even as the lions waited for the accusers of Daniel in the days of old.

"And you have eaten nothing to-day?" O'Flynn asked, while he filled his pipe a second time.

"Nothing since I took my bread and coffee at the shop round the corner, but I have slept."

"You will die if you don't eat," said O'Flynn; "how much do you pay for this room?"

"Seven shillings a week."

"Ah! then you have eight wherewith to buy food and fire and pay for your washing. What a merry life you must lead, lad, and how content you ought to be that your mother can manage to pay for her three fields and her potato patch forty sovereigns in the year. She is a widow and lives on buttermilk, does she not? and your little brothers dispense with shoes, and my lord's agent, Mr. Foster, is an Englishman, is he not? the right hand of her

ladyship the countess, and they all tell you how thankful your mother ought to be for the buttermilk—ha! ha! ha!"

"Mockery is thrown away upon me in my misery," Roland answered, gloomily. "Father Moore, our good priest, has taught me almost all he knows. I have read fairly for my age; I am not without power; I can and will do much, and I have wished to help my country."

"And now," said O'Flynn, with a sneer, "have you decided only to help yourself?"

"I am only a lad, and ignorant as yet," Roland answered. "I hate the oppressors; but how are we to strike? They have riches, they have soldiers, they make the laws. We must wait."

Sullivan threw down his pipe and folded his arms.

"While we wait our people die or they go out to other lands and leave the green isle to the Saxon. Foster, your earl's agent, will rent your farm and turn out the widow and the babes."

Roland turned pale.

"If I thought so," he said.

"Thought?" cried O'Flynn, "it will soon be done. Roland, you say the oppressors have wealth; we have wealth." He struck his wide chest.

"Now, Sullivan there knows I could gain from America two thousand pounds if I sent for it. Will you come over to Wicklow, O'Hara, and raise soldiers—soldiers whose hearts inspire them to fight in the defence of their wives and their babes? We shall have arms." He paused a moment. "What is there to prevent our sacking Donnamore, even as the soldiers of the Commonwealth sacked the houses of the lovers

the Stuarts? We are more oppressed than was England under the Stuarts. Let us raise thirty thousand men and slay all the soldiers in your little town of Dungan. Let us burn the houses of the tyrants to the ground. Listen, boy: I can get arms and money in abundance. I only want men with men's hearts."

O'Flynn arose and threw out his arms. Roland turned away his head. He thought of his mother toiling from morn till night with hardly enough bread to put in the mouths of her children; he thought of his brothers barefoot, wild, hungry, and the vision of an oppressed people rising as one man and marching out to victory with banners waving rose before him. He was imaginative, highly organised, full of poetic and heroic fancies, and half starved. Pardon the lad then if his heart swelled at the prospect.

"I will join you," he said; "but I must meet this person to-morrow. Give me the password and I will join you after."

The two conspirators stayed late. O'Flynn went out for hot supper from an eating-house, and insisted that Roland and Sullivan should eat, drink and be merry. All the next day Roland's head ached, and his heart was as heavy as lead.

What had he promised? Would this step plunge him into ruin, and, perhaps, death? or would he be able to take rank, as he fondly dreamed, with those great liberators of their country, William Tell and Garibaldi?

At eight o'clock punctually he stood under the clock at the Charing Cross Station, and looking anxiously for the sallow woman with flashing eyes. Presently, a voice said:

"You are here, then, my young friend?" "Don't take any notice, only follow me at a distance."

Roland saw the tall, graceful form of a woman wrapped in a wide, dark cloak; on her head was a small, close, black bonnet; her face was closely veiled.

"Follow me," she repeated, "at a distance. I will sign to you when to come up with me, and then something will astonish you, perhaps."

She passed on swiftly through the crowded station. She was taller than the other women present by half a head, and there was something peculiar in her gait; it was self-asserting; nay, rather it was commanding.

She swung along with a grace, a swiftness, an impatience of obstacles that struck Roland as unique, and increased his interest in the extraordinary French governess.

She might be Charlotte Corday come to life, mused the youth; he had read much of French Revolutionary history.

At this portion of his life it formed a great part of his studies.

"Charlotte Corday," he repeated, as he followed the French governess across the station yard and out into the crowded Strand; "no, I think there is a fiercer element in yonder woman than in the young assassin of Marat."

She looked round stealthily now, beckoned Roland and crossed the street. She passed on again, still beckoning. She now stood in the stone space near the lions and fountains in Trafalgar Square. The light of a lamp fell full on her head for a moment as she turned it towards Roland, but it was still closely veiled in black lace.

Roland stood now before her, hat in hand. They were removed from the turmoil and crowd of the streets; they were partly in shadow. The bitter north wind rushed round them, and whistled shrewishly amid the stone figures in the square. The sky above was black and threatening, though now and anon the moon showed her pale face through the rent in a cloud.

Every now and anon fell a light sprinkling of snow. It was a night of that intense severity which drives men and animals alike to the shelter of home and the warmth of fire. The water in the fountains was freezing. Children in their stands beat their breasts to warm their blood.

Roland was ill clad in a thin, poor overcoat. He shivered a little as he stood in the wind before Mademoiselle Mattelle, but she was erect, self-possessed, and addressed him with the most perfect ease and sang-froid in the world.

"I have a message for you from the Lady Elaine Harwood, the daughter of the Earl of Donnamore. The girl is romantic; her blood is young and warm. She is like so many of these English aristocrats, they know not how to curb a new fancy when it arises in their pampered souls. Lady Elaine is what she calls in love with you, ha! ha! ha! Now you do not seem to have made your fortune. Why not set about and win one at once? You see, monsieur, you have the fatal gift of beauty. Ah, why call it flattery to say so? Many a man less handsome has been called from the gutter and rags when a Russian Empress has admitted him from her carriage, and he has been raised from the kennel to the nobility. He has had gold, houses, lands, titles showered on him. If you have read Russian archives you will know this. Speak, monsieur, are you too proud and too independent to win a fortune through the smiles of a great lady?"

"Are you not her governess, madame? And is not the Lady Elaine fifteen years old?"

The lad asked the questions with a lofty scorn. He was enraged with this woman for likening the pure Madonna-faced child to the infamous dead and gone Russian empresses of which history tells such hideous stories. Distrust and disgust of the veiled woman crept into his heart.

"You speak reproachfully, monsieur," said Christine. "I do not mind telling you my motive and my plans; but it is cold here, let us go to an hotel, and when we have warmth we can discuss this strange and capricious girl. I am sorry she pleases you so little, and that all the admiration is on the wrong side, ha! ha!"

She moved forward as she spoke, showing Roland by her imperious gesture that he was to follow her, not to presume to walk by her side.

He followed her at a little distance, wondering very much; feeling his distaste for mademoiselle increase with every step of his as he followed her.

Presently they were in Leicester Square, and mademoiselle went up the steps of a small foreign hotel. She signed to Roland to follow her. He did so, and found himself in a stone hall, and then he was following the swift footsteps of mademoiselle up a wide carpeted stone staircase.

Evidently mademoiselle was perfectly at home in that house. She spoke to a waiter whom she met on the first landing, a thin, dark man, napkin in hand. She spoke in her own tongue.

Roland could read as much French as the priest had taught him, but he could not understand it when spoken. However, it seemed that the waiter knew mademoiselle; he flew up to the second landing, led the way down a long passage, while mademoiselle, still signing to Roland to follow, went on lightly and airily, and presently Roland found himself in a room that seemed in his eyes splendid. It was furnished with a suite of dark crimson velvet; there were three gold-framed pier glasses; the waiter lighted a handsome gas chandelier; in the wide grate smouldered a large fire which he stirred into a blaze.

"Bring us—my cousin and myself," said Christine, indicating Roland, "bring us quickly some roast chicken and fried potatoes, as in France, also a bottle of sound port. The cold of this depressing climate drives me to wines the strength of which would have made me shudder a little while ago in my own South. Ah! it is a detestable country except for the great."

She spoke English now for Roland's benefit, although she had given the order for the supper in French. She threw off impatiently her hat, cloak, veil, and under wraps, and stood up looking at Roland with her flashing black eyes. A graceful woman, wearing a plain, rich dress of olive green velvet, round her throat was a collar

of point lace, fastened by a glowing carbuncle. The same gems shone at her ears, her plentiful dark plaits were pierced by a golden pin. Her face, sallow by day, seemed of a rich, dusky pallor by gaslight.

She smiled at Roland and showed her glittering white teeth.

"You will not be proud and refuse to be my guest to this little supper, monsieur?" she said.

"Indeed, madame, I am too poor to pay for such a supper," said half-starved Roland, "but you must excuse my consenting to allow you to pay for me. Call it pride, I call it self-respect, and that is dearer to me than anything in the world."

The lad spoke with a quiet decision that puzzled mademoiselle. She bit her thin lips, and the cruel gleams in her eyes grew more sinister. Roland had taken off his hat. He held it down, but he looked fearlessly, yet modestly, at the French governess.

"He is very handsome," she thought; "but he is thin, he is cold, he is hungry, he is shabby, and still he is proud, and with the pride that I used to call noble in the old days in the long ago." She stilled a sigh. "What have I to do with aught that is noble?" she asked herself, "there is nothing noble. All is sham and pretence; every face is masked, every smile is false, every fine sentiment is but the gilding of some bitter pill which the poor wretch to whom it is addressed must swallow. You will not eat, monsieur?" Mademoiselle Mattelle asked, with another smile, in which her white teeth glittered, and her black eyes flashed. "You are too proud to be my guest—is it so?"

As she spoke the door opened, and there entered the waiter with two covered dishes on a tray, which he placed on the table. He took off the covers and the fragrance of the delicate roasted birds tempted our hungry hero, but he would not yield to the temptation.

His self-respect was dearer to him than his life. He was resolved that yonder woman should not have it in her power to point him out in the future as the man she fed when he was starving.

"With many thanks, madame, for your kindness, I decline to allow you to spend money on me. I am not one whit ashamed of what I cannot help, my poverty, but I should be ashamed to allow a lady to pay for my dinner."

"My good youth, you will have to learn less conveniences—how call you it in English? I mean the manners of good society; you show me that you were reared on the borders of a bog in your native land when you refuse to become my guest on account of the money your dinner will cost. Ha! ha! ha!"

Roland's swarthy face flushed crimson all through its dusky pallor when he heard the Frenchwoman's laugh and her words. It was true he was an Irish peasant by birth. He knew nothing of the manners of the great. He had behaved like a boor in talking of the money that his meal would cost to the lady who invited him to be her guest, and yet his pride and his instincts were the pride and the instincts of a gentleman, only he had lacked tact and courtesy in talking of the cost. He saw it all in a flash.

"I apologise humbly for my rudeness," he began.

"Instead of apologising, show your good sense by sitting down to this excellent dinner. You really need it. Pardon me, I will be as frank as yourself. You look hungry; you are hungry; you are not ashamed of it? No; why should you be? Is it not the robbers of the land who should and ought to be ashamed of everything that happens in your country and in this. Mon Dieu, who then are the robbers? The land owners, the nobles, the men whose vile ancestors seized your lands and put your ancestors to the sword in the dark old murderous days of the second Henry. I am a republican. I hate the nobles everywhere as Satan hates holy water." Christine beat her breast. "I am a daughter myself of the sovereign people—the people who arose and slew their tyrant nobles when the last century was hoary. Now we have a Republic, and so

may you have in Ireland soon, if you will. Nay, I am one of yourselves. I have heard the Lady Elaine say that you told her you were Irish, and a rebel; so am I a rebel. I do not despise your poverty. I honour you for it. Sit down and dine with me as a friend," and Roland, who had listened with eyes of fire to the republican sentiments of the Frenchwoman, felt his dislike to her evaporate.

He was an enthusiast for Fenianism—pardon him, reader—at this time. In his young eyes, each individual who defended the people and defied the nobility was honourable—nay, was sublime, by reason of the noble cause he served.

He no longer felt humiliated at partaking of this woman's bounty. Was she not his equal—his elder sister? Charlotte Corday, Joan of Arc, Madame Roland—all those heroines of old France who lived alone for freedom and gave their blood and their lives in its cause, seemed to exist again in this noble woman.

He had thought her a shameless corrupter of youth and innocence, instead she was a heroine who was prepared to become a martyr. He clasped her hands, tears shone in his eyes, of which his brave young heart was not ashamed. He sat down and ate and enjoyed the daintily prepared repast with a keen relish. Afterwards the waiter removed the dishes and brought wine and fruit.

Christine turned to the fire, threw herself into an armchair, and pointed to one opposite, in which Roland placed himself.

"Do you smoke?" Christine asked, with a smile.

"Yes," Roland confessed to a manly love of tobacco.

Mademoiselle went to a little cabinet, opened a drawer, took out a box of cigars, handed one to Roland, lighted one herself, and soon these two haters of nobility were each enjoying a delicately-flavoured cigar. Both smoked for some time in silence, which Christine was the first to break.

"Answer me," she said, brusquely, "is it your wish to marry Lady Elaine Harwood?"

So sudden was the inquiry that Roland started as if he had been shot.

"Madame," he stammered, "how can you ask me, a beggar? and she—"

"I only asked if it was your wish," Christine said, with a smile, holding her cigar between thumb and finger, and looking as she smiled, not at Roland, but at the fire. "I know that she is a girl of the strongest passions. These are sometimes joined among the aristocracy to the coldest heart. It is not so with Elaine; there is a touch of her father in her, something of Irish blood. She is an affectionate girl, but they would do well to marry her soon; she is one for escapades and foolish love madnesses. Ah, how many things happen among these great folks of which nobody knows anything, it is all hushed up so soon. Do not look alarmed, this child is innocent and pure as a snowdrop. She knows not the shadow of evil. The countess, her mother, keeps her and her sister, the Lady Clarice, in complete ignorance of the ways of the world. They never even read a newspaper; still Elaine's nature is intensely strong. She will love, and love to madness. Already she loves you so. She does not know the strength of the giant which has sprung up in her soul. She cannot sleep; she cannot eat; she talks only of you. I have not warned her lady mother; the countess would shut the child up in a convent of the Carmelites for life. You, who are of our faith, know what a life she would lead—the life of a condemned felon for that fragile child."

Roland started to his feet, his eyes blazed, his chest heaved. Christine flashed one glance upon him, then lowered her eyes, and she smiled.

"It is as I thought," she said. "When first I saw you watching her yesterday in the Museum at Kensington, I said to myself, there is a young man who has already drank of the cup whose memory never dies, for that fierce love wine intoxicates the soul to madness. Only to certain mortal men and mortal women is it

given to drink of that wine. It is those who are capable of great things; those who would die for a cause; those whose souls are akin to the immortals. I saw it in your eyes. I said to myself, at once and for ever yonder youth loves Elaine, even as Tasso loved Leonora; as Dante loved Beatrice; as Byron loved Mary Chaworth; a love to burn into the soul and illumine the whole spiritual being so that it forms an altar of fire to which all other things are sacrificed, and I said to myself, what a pity, for the sake of that cold child, and then I said to myself, I will watch the girl, and lo! I found her love-sick, pining, drooping for a stranger—a son of the people—at first sight. Then I said to my heart, this shall not be; these two shall marry; this is a marriage made in Heaven, it shall be ratified on earth."

Roland was pacing the room with long strides; his face was white with intense emotion; it worked violently. Christine watched him with a stealthy smile.

"How can this be done, madame?" he asked, coming suddenly to a halt before her, and folding his arms. "If she is my wife she must live with me—where and how? I will not hide from you that the first moment I saw that angel face I vowed a vow in the deepest deep of my heart that come what would that girl, an earl's daughter, should one day become my wife—mine!"

His nostrils dilated; his eyes burned; his rich red lips were pale and compressed. Christine looked at the fire and laughed to herself in her heart.

"Poor wild Irish heart," she said; "how the world will tame it down! In the course of years it will be heavy as lead; it will harden into stone as mine has done. Time was when I, too, vowed a vow that my love should be my lawful lord, and I his own true wife. It has not come to pass, but there remains the bitter kernel of the luscious fruit which was torn from my eager hands. There is still revenge, which some call sweet, but I call the victory of the gods over the powers of the demon! Victory! victory! I see it shining in the distant vista, a crown of diamonds, though there be nails of iron within which must first pierce my temples. Victory! this wild lad is a tool in my hands. I will not harm him; no, I like him well. There is even something akin between what he is now and what I was in the long past. He shall have yonder baby-faced chit to wife as surely as he stands there in his picturesque young beauty and in his shabby clothes."

"She shall be your wife," said Christine aloud, "and soon, my friend—your wife before the trees at Donnamore have donned all their leaves. Your wife when the ice on Loch Elin is melted, and just as the snow crown fades from the hoary head of Carrig Flynn. You meant, I suppose, that in some way, either as a Republican soldier, or as a poet, or as an orator (Heaven alone knows as what, but you know that you can be something above the average of commonplace mortals)—you meant that you would rise; dazzle her with your triumphs; lay your laurels at her feet; win her by your heroism, your devotion, your matchless love. Ah! what a vain dream! While you were struggling to attain eminence, she would have been married to some marquis with two hundred thousand a year. They have their eyes already on a parti for Elaine. They marry these aristocrats often at eighteen, and you could not win fame unless you toiled hard for ten years. No, you must win her now at once."

"But how am I to surround her at present with the merest necessities?—I, a poor ragged wretch."

"She will remain surrounded with all the pomp and circumstance of an earl's daughter. You will go out into the world to win your laurels. You will not claim her as your bride before the world, until you have won them. It must be a secret marriage. Do you understand?"

"If she consents," Roland began.

"Consents! she is wild with impatience to become your lawful wife. I have to reason with

her imprudent haste. You see my motive, I hope, clearly?" Christine asked, with a cunning gleam in her black eyes. "I have the cause of the people at heart. You a brave leader of brave hearts will be powerful, besides, with the fortune of the Lady Elaine in your hands. When she is eighteen, she will come into an estate left her by her great uncle in the county of Surrey; it is called Stanhope Hall, and is worth twelve thousand a year. Nobody could take that from her, not if she married a sweep. Now you understand what I meant by offering you a fortune. I meant it all in honour and honesty."

"It is too much," Roland began.

"No, no, it is not enough according to your merits," Christine answered. "You forget this child is to be trained into a republican, aristocrat and prejudiced as she is. When she is eighteen she will defy her mother, take possession of Stanhope Hall, and acknowledge you to the whole world."

Roland sat down and buried his face in his hands.

"When shall I see her," he asked, hoarsely.

"To-morrow, Christmas Day."

"Where? When?"

"The countess gives a ball to her servants at Christmas when the family are at Donnamore. Many of the better-off tenants are invited. You were always too young and too ragged to be invited. Now that the family are in town, there is not the space for the dance that we have at the castle, but there will be a great party in the housekeeper's room, a Christmas tree, and games and forfeits. The servants have invited their friends. I have actually interested the countess for you. She knows you are the son of a tenant. You will find a card of invite to the servants' party at your lodgings."

"And I am ragged."

"Do not be above borrowing from me five pounds; am I not your sister in the cause of freedom. You can buy some good second-hand clothes and some shoes for that sum, and you will be the handsomest man in the great house. Will you come?"

And Roland answered:

"I will; though it is terrible to me to take your money."

But Christine gave him one of her sweetest smiles.

"Am I not your sister?" she said. Then she arose and placed a five-pound note in the lad's hands. "I must go, my pretty brother," she said. "I am supposed to be spending an hour or two with my elderly aunt in Pimlico, but I must be back in the great house by eleven."

Then she wrapped herself again in her mantle, and she rang the bell.

"While I pay the bill, Roland, will you go and call a cab?"

Roland rushed away to do her bidding. Just as the cab drew up before the door, Christine came down the stairs. She clasped Roland's hand in both her own.

"Adieu, my brother," she said, "keep a brave heart. I will welcome you to-morrow. Mind that you arrive punctually at six."

She entered the cab, and was driven off. Roland took his way through the wintry streets. He turned into a ready-made clothes warehouse, and soon had fitted on and paid for a respectable suit. He next bought boots, gloves, a snowy shirt, and a dark crimson tie, which his natural taste taught him suited the dusky hue of his fine face; and then he went straight to his poor lodging, mounted the stairs, struck a light, and saw an envelope, directed to him, lying on the mean table.

He opened it. A printed card of invite to an evening party given by the Countess of Donnamore to her domestics and their friends. Roland felt unreasonably stung. He took the card, rent it in twain, trampled on it.

"Am I a hound?" he asked himself; "I am afraid I am."

Then he sat down, put his head on the table, and shed tears of vague, boyish, romantic self pity.

(To be Continued.)

"BE GENTLE WITH THE LITTLE ONES."

OH, PARENTS, be gentle with the little ones; the little, wayward, loving, lovable children; be gentle, be very tender and wise. Childhood is brief. Only a few years, and the days dawn no longer in rainbow tints; only a few years, and the woodland fairies flit away; only a few years, and the grass and flowers lose their mystical language; only a few years, and the clouds will be clouds, floating vapour—not white ships, birds of paradise, or shining angels; only a few years, and the enchantment that once brooded over all things will be destroyed; only a few years, and the laughing, fun-loving, precious children will have passed through the magic realm of childhood, and we shall miss them, sadly, oh! so sadly. For the big boys, and almost young ladies, are not at all like the trim little figures that so often broke in upon our quiet hours, and utterly routed the grandest thoughts that ever presumed to come in contact with our slow-going pen.

Yes, be gentle, be patient with them; laugh and frolic with them; gather flowers and mosses; listen to the fairies singing softly among their leafy tents (though your dull ears will never catch the fine strain, I know), but listen all the same. The children hear their songs, in voice of bird, or chirp of insect, or in the passing wind.

Be gentle, throw aside the coveted book, for childhood is brief. Join their sports, make the bright hours brighter, for with every hour one golden link of life's morning drops away. Dear, loving, little ones, Heaven bless them, and keep their spotless souls safe from the stains of guilt and crime!

Be gentle. In after years your tender forethought for their happiness will come to them, and perhaps come when all the world seems dark. Some royal June day, full of rare glories, and precious memories will seem to unfold, as a wonderful picture, before eyes heavy and tearful; one such a memory may save a soul from years of anguish.

Be gentle; correct their faults with love unspeakable dwelling in your hearts, a love that would remove every thorn from their pathway, if that were wisest. Remember harsh measures have caused unutterable sorrow in many a home. Ah! father, mother, why should you wound those tiny hands, because the little one has offended? Why inflict pain? Will pain cure an evil temper, or sudden passion? Be gentle and wise—be a true parent. In years to come think you, that mild-eyed daughter, that manly son, will love you better, because in childhood you made them suffer bodily pain, to teach them to control an evil temper? Ah, me! I think there are many who would give untold wealth, if they possessed it, if thereby they could blot out the cruel memory of a blow inflicted by a parent's hand—that strong, loving hand, that should have led them firmly and tenderly to the right. Parents, be gentle.

M. C. E. F.

THE ANIMATED FRYING-PAN.

IN Ireland, a warming-pan is called a friar. Not many years ago, an unsophisticated girl took service in a hotel. Poor thing—she had never heard of a warming-pan in her life, though she regularly confessed to a friar once a year.

It happened on a cold and drizzly night that a priest took lodging at the inn. He had travelled far, and being weary, retired at an early hour.

Soon after, the mistress of the house called the servant girl.

"Betty, put the friar into No. 6."

Up went Betty to the poor priest.

"Your reverence must go to No. 6."

There is no help for it, and the poor priest arose, donned a dressing-gown, and went into No. 6.

In about fifteen minutes the mistress called to Betty:

"Put the friar into No. 4."

Betty said something about disturbing his reverence, which her mistress did not understand.

So she told the girl in a sharp voice to do as she was directed, and she would always do right. Up went Betty, and the unhappy priest, despite his angry protestations, was obliged to turn out of No. 6, and get into No. 4.

But a little time elapsed ere the girl was told to put the friar into No. 8, and the poor priest thinking everybody was mad in the house, and sturdily resolving to quit the next morning, crept into the damp sheets of No. 8. But he was to enjoy no peace there. Betty was again ordered to put the friar into No. 3, and with tears in her eyes she obeyed.

In about an hour the lady concluded to go to bed herself, and the friar was ordered into her room.

Wondering what it all meant, Betty roused the priest, and told him he must go into No. 11. The monk crossed himself, counted his beads, and went into No. 11.

It so happened that the husband of the landlady was troubled with the green-eyed monster. Going up to bed, therefore, before his wife, his suspicions were confirmed by seeing between his own sheets a man sound asleep.

To rouse the sleeper, and kick him into the street, was the work of a moment, nor was the mistake explained until the next day, when the priest informed the innkeeper what outrages had been committed upon him, and he learned to his amazement that he had been serving the whole night as a warming-pan.

IT ISN'T ALL IN BRINGING UP.

It isn't all in "bringing up."

Let folks say what they will;

To silver-scur a pewter cup—

It will be pewter still.

E'en of old Solomon,

Who said, "Train up a child,"

If I mistake not had a son

Proved rattle-brained and wild.

A man of mark who fain would pass

For lord of sea and land,

May have the training of a son,

And bring him up full grand;

May give him all the wealth of lore,

Of college, and of school,

Yet, after all, make him no more

Than just a decent fool.

Another, raised by penury.

Upon his bitter bread,

Whose road to knowledge is like that

The good to Heaven must tread,

He's got a spark of nature's light,

He'll fan it to a flame,

Till in its burning letters bright

The world may read his name.

If it were all in "bringing up,"

In counsel and restraint,

Some rascals had been honest men

I'd been myself a saint.

Oh, it isn't all in "bringing up,"

Let folks say what they will,

Neglect may dim a silver cup—

It will be silver still.

THE SCIENCE OF MILLING.

THE problem of milling is to separate in as simple and cheap a manner as possible the interior of the grain from the outer rind, the beard, and the germ; to thoroughly grind the cells of which the grain is composed, and by setting free the glair substances and starch grains from the outer integument in which they are enclosed, to facilitate a quicker and more

intimate contact of the nourishing qualities contained in the wheat with the human stomach.

The Austro-Hungarian high milling, with its nicely exact elimination of even the smallest modicum of bran, and its fine and careful grinding, of all other methods approximates the nearest to this ideal, and the bread made of flour so treated is consequently the most nourishing and the easiest of digestion of any bread in the world.

According to this theory, if we would answer the practical question: "How much pure flour can be got out of the grain?" the above named experiment will enable us to do it in the following figures: Pure flour—wheat, 73 to 82 per cent.; rye, 75 to 80 per cent. Waste and fodder wheat, 18 to 22 per cent.; rye, 20 to 25 per cent.

A PROMPT ANSWER.

HERE is a case of prompt answer to prayer. Two little boys were arrested in Holyoke for stripping the leaves from the trees in the park. Soon after they had been locked up, an officer heard their voices, and peeped into the cell. Both of the children were down on their knees, with their hands clasped, and tears running down their cheeks.

"Oh, Lord, please let us out of this place, and we'll never do it again, never, never," prayed one sobbing culprit, while the other was repeating the Lord's prayer.

"Pray harder," said one of them, "and speak your words plain, or God won't understand you."

"I try to, Jimmy, but I'm crying so I can't," said the other, and then both redoubled their prayers.

The officer slipped away, got the keys, and compounded their felony.

DEATH OF MR. FREDERICK GYE.

MR. FREDERICK GYE died on the 4th inst. at Dycheley Park, Oxfordshire, the seat of Viscount Dillon, in consequence of the accident which befell him whilst out shooting with Lord Dillon, the Hon. Spencer Ponsonby-Fane, and Sir Alfred Horsford, at Dycheley, on the afternoon of Thursday, the 28th ult. The deceased, who had for nearly thirty years past been connected with the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden was identified for that period with the history of opera in England.

The Royal Italian Opera was founded with the view of securing a "more perfect representation of the lyric drama than has yet been attained in this country;" and no one can say that the aim thus confidently proclaimed was not fully reached. The distinctive feature of the performances was for many years the excellence with which the grand five-act operas of Meyerbeer were presented. Mr. Gye's management commenced in September, 1843, at a salary for the season of £1,500, together with a share of the profits.

So brilliant was the success of his first season that Colonel Brownlow Knox offered to back Mr. Gye to the extent of £7,000 if he would accept the sole direction of the opera, and arrangements were shortly after begun which finally placed the establishment in the competent hands that have ever since conducted it. It is understood that Mr. Ernest Gye, the son of the deceased, who recently married Mdlle. Albani, the Canadian prima donna, will continue to carry on the establishment.

The inquest on the body of Mr. Gye was held at Dycheley House, the seat of Viscount Dillon, on Thursday, the 5th inst. The evidence was to the effect that on the return from a shooting party, as Mr. Gye was in the act of assisting Sir Alfred Horsford over a sunken fence, the gun of the latter went off, and the contents lodged in Mr. Gye's right side. A verdict of Accidental Death was returned. Mr. Gye's remains have been brought to London for interment.



[FORBIDDEN LOVE.]

STRONG TEMPTATION: A Tale of Two Sinners.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"That Young Person," "Why She Forsook
Him," &c., &c.

CHAPTER IX.

IT BEGINS WITH AN "I."

TWAS MINE, 'TIS HERS. SHAKESPEARE.

Mrs. Yorke had caught the name spoken by Mr. Evans to his clerk, and she stared at Cecil Kyrle as though he had been some newly discovered curiosity. Mr. Evans rose and bowed gravely as he offered his hand to Cecil.

"Our search is ended," he said, simply; "you must at once assume your title, Sir Cecil, your cousin has been dead three years, and his only child is a daughter."

"Dora always did bring me vexation," chimed in Mrs. Yorke, who began to feel herself neglected, "but for her I might be the mother of a baronet."

"This is Harold Kyrle's widow," said Mr. Evans, abruptly, presenting his visitors to each other. "My dear madame, this is the head of your husband's family, Sir Cecil Kyrle, your daughter's cousin."

"I'm sure I'm very glad to see the gentleman," said Mrs. Yorke, sweetly. "I live near Kennington, sir, a nice healthy part, and close to the tramways; 'if you should ever feel inclined for a twopenny ride, Sir Cecil, I'd be proud to see you. Suppose we say some Sunday to tea and muffins," continued the widow, bent on hospitality; "blood's thicker than water, you know."

Sir Cecil looked horrified. Of innate refine-

ment himself, Mrs. Yorke was torture to him, besides, he was wondering what the mistress of Lakewood could be like to have such a mother. Mr. Evans guessed his thoughts.

"Mrs. Kyrle has so long been used to the name of Yorke that she prefers to retain it still. I am sorry Miss Kyrle is not here this morning. Mrs. Yorke, you were about to give me her address when Sir Cecil came in."

"Dora went to Calais last December," said Mrs. Yorke, equably.

"By herself?" exclaimed the solicitor, disapprovingly.

"Of course; she's twenty-two; why I wasn't nearly as old as that when I married. We were poor," observed the widow, deprecatingly, "and it was Dora's own wish to work for herself. Her poor father wasted a mint of money on her education, it was folly not to make use of it."

"Then Miss Kyrle is a governess at Calais?" trying hard to obtain some definite information.

"Yes, in a school or a convent, she didn't tell me which; she was to teach English, and Madame Laure was to give her twelve pounds a year. It would have been wicked to refuse such a chance. I made myself quite ill getting up so early to see her off."

"And that is two months ago?"

"Yes," agreed Mrs. Yorke, "it was just three weeks before Christmas that she went."

"You must send for her at once."

"But I can't, I have no notion of the address. Dora promised to write, but she never did. She don't care much about me now, I daresay. She thinks of nothing but her grand French friends."

Mr. Evans and Sir Cecil exchanged glances.

"Mrs. Yorke," said the baronet, gently, "this is very sad. I am sure you must be very anxious about your daughter."

"Dora's not like other girls," said the mother, equably; "she always took care of herself, and settled everything."

"Did you see the letters that passed between her and this Madame Laure?"

"No, they were all in French. Dora put them into English for me. They meant just what I tell you. Dora went for one year certain, and she was to have twelve pounds. I'm not sure the lady's name was Laure. It may have been something longer, but I am positive it began with L."

"And the address?"

"It was a castle, because I laughed and told Dora how grand she'd be. It's no use you asking me any questions, Mr. Evans, I know nothing but what I've told you."

"Was Miss Kyrle pretty?" asked Cecil, reluctantly.

"She was not at all like me," with a sigh of contentment; "still, when she was dressed she was not so bad, Mr. Evans," as the clock struck twelve. "I must be going, for I've ordered a lovely shoulder of mutton, baked with potatoes under it, for half-past one. Good-day, gentlemen. The fifty pounds are very nice, though I really think I deserved the hundred pounds."

"What an awful woman!" said the young baronet, when Mrs. Yorke was fairly gone. "I don't believe she cares one straw about her daughter. I hope when Miss Kyrle is found she won't take her mother to live at Lakewood; it would seem to me like desecration of the dear old place."

"I fancy Miss Kyrle will be very different to her mother."

"I think so too, Evans. It's strange I never heard of that girl till to-day. Everything people thought would be mine is now hers, and yet I feel full of pity for her."

"Who can we send to Calais?"

"I think I had better go myself. I heard Mrs. Yorke's description, such as it was, and I fancy I should know a Kyrle face anywhere."

"If it's a pretty face, and the girl turns out a lady, it would be a splendid match, Sir Cecil; title and fortune might then go together."

Cecil shook his head.

"I'm booked, Evans; that is I care so much for one girl that if she won't have me I shouldn't care to have another. I am not in the least in

love with Dorothea Kyrle's image, but I am desperately sorry for her. Fancy a girl thinking twelve pounds a year too good a chance to be refused!"

"I wonder how she will receive the news of her riches," said the elder man, gravely.

"Well, I haven't found her yet. I shall start for Calais to-night, and begin my researches to-morrow. It's a strange errand, Evans, to go and hunt for a girl I have never seen, and who lives at a castle with a lady whose name begins with an L!"

CHAPTER X.

TOGETHER.

Had we never loved one kindly,
Had we never loved one blindly,
Never met or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Face to face they stood—the man who had loved with rare constancy, the woman who had yielded to strong temptation, the two who had loved each other and hoped to spend their lives together; the one bent her eyes on the ground before the man she thought had wronged her; the man spoke first in a voice full of surprise and intense feeling; he said simply:

"Dora."

The great tenderness with which he pronounced that word gave to Dorothea a firm belief that, although Vere Eastcourt had forsaken her, he loved her still.

"You have no right to speak to me," she said, coldly; "three years ago you won my heart for the plaything of an hour; you have done me harm enough."

—Here Eastcourt took her reluctant hand in his, and held it firmly.

"Dora, you shall hear me. By the memory of your father who loved us both, by the Heaven above us, I swear I have been true to you. I could not have been more constant to a wife than my heart has been to you, my first and only love. I have thought only of you these three weary years."

"Then why did you leave me? Why forsake me in my bitter trouble? Oh, Vere, it broke my heart!"

"Dora, surely you trusted me; you believed my letter?"

"I never had a letter from you, Vere, in all my life. Oh! there is some cruel mystery!"

Gently he led her away from the public foot-path into a secluded corner of the grounds; placing her on a rustic seat, he sat down beside her.

"Dora, when you and I parted, we both agreed that I should see your father the next day. Darling, I did see him; is it possible that in the excitement and suffering of his illness he did not tell you this?"

"I never heard," she whispered. "Poor papa never spoke after he was first taken ill. Mother said she thought he expected the illness, for he had been talking to her of a great many things in the morning before he went out."

"He did expect illness, Dora. When early on that morning I asked him for the most precious gift he had to give—his daughter—he told me he felt certain his death was very near." Dorothea cried softly; it seemed to her her life had been one long failure.

"Mr. Yorke told me, Dora, there was an important family secret to be confided to you when you were one-and-twenty, and till then he could not sanction our engagement. He was very kind, Dora; he said he could trust me with his darling, and living or dead his blessing would be with us on our wedding day. We were both young, he urged, and eighteen months would pass quickly; once of age you should be mine."

"Dora, loving you as I did, knowing you would be true to me, could I do anything but yield? My brother was alive then, and I had nothing in the world besides my pay; prudence was on your father's side."

"You were quite right, Vere," said Dora, quickly. "I could not have had you do differently."

"I wrote the whole truth to you, dear, from my home, where I had been summoned to my brother's deathbed. I told you that I could never be content to be only a friend to you, so that for the next eighteen months I should not come to you. I implored you in any trouble to write to me, and then for that brief year and a half I bade you farewell."

"Vere, I am so glad. I think believing you faithless was turning my heart into stone. Our love has brought us little happiness, but, oh! the joy to know you are all I believed you."

"And you never had my letter, Dora?"

"Never, Vere."

"When I heard of Lieutenant Yorke's death I wrote again, telling you that his wish was more binding on me still, now he was no longer here to enforce it. I said on the day you were twenty-one I should come to you. I begged you to send me word where to find you. Dora, when the time I had so long looked forward to came and brought no line from you, what could I think but that you had forgotten me?"

"I have often wished I could."

"We have a long life before us, my darling one; in its sunshine we shall blot out these weary years of separation."

And she was silent. Before they parted she knew he must be told the truth. But now, in the first moment of their reunion, she could not find words.

How could she break to him that never more could they two be as they once had been?—that summer dew and winter frost, seed-time and harvest, youth and age, would find them divided by a gulf of her own forming, raised by her yielding to Strong Temptation.

"Oh, Vere," she cried, in the anguish of her heart, "I wish that I were dead!"

"Don't, darling," he said, tenderly. "Remember, I am with you henceforward to share every sorrow I cannot drive from you."

He put one arm around her, and with his other arm gently took hers.

"Dora, something troubles you?"

"Yes," she said, brokenly, "and nothing can cure my trouble."

"Is it your mother?" he asked, kindly. "I know she is not like you, but that makes no difference to such love as mine. I shall never forget that you are her child, Dora. I think," he went on, slowly, "you have grown more beautiful than ever. In all these years I have thought less of your face than yourself, but I am glad my wife is so fair to see. I little thought the happiness that was coming to me this morning."

"Don't, Vere," hoarsely. "I can't bear it."

"Dora, what is wrong? I know you are keeping some trouble back, dear. Won't you remember I ask nothing better than to bear half of every burden for you."

His arm encircled her more closely. He bent and kissed her lips.

"You are keeping me in suspense, dear."

"Oh, Vere, I can't bear to tell you. You won't love me when you know all, and, oh! I have missed your love so in all these weary years."

"I shall love you till I die," he answered, firmly. "Tell me all. You can trust me, surely, darling?"

With her face buried on his shoulder, so that she could not see his blue eyes, she began, falteringly:

"Vere, I have not been true to you. I thought you false, and I grew desperate."

"You are engaged to someone else? Even that can't come between us, Dora. Mine is the first claim."

"Vere, why won't you understand me? It is worse than that."

"Not married?"

"Yes."

Vere Eastcourt said no word, but every gleam of hope died out of his face. He looked like some statue.

He had loved Dorothea with his whole heart. He had mourned her bitterly, and found her only to hear she was another's.

"Oh, don't look like that, Vere. Don't turn

away. Speak to me. Say you forgive me, for pity's sake."

Even in that moment of supreme disappointment Vere thought for her, not for himself.

"Don't blame yourself," he said, quietly; "you never had my letters. I can't wonder that you thought me false."

"Oh, Vere, I am so wretched. I am as miserable as I deserve to be."

"Dora, it hurts me for you to speak like that. You must not blame yourself."

"I sold myself," she moaned. "Vere, I did so hate poverty. No one cared what I did. I thought, if only I were rich and saw new scenes, I could forget you."

"And did you?"

She shook her head.

"I think, Vere, our lives are fated to influence each other. Every day since my wedding I have thought of you."

"And the man's name?" abruptly.

"Bryan Hastings."

Involuntarily Maude's words came to Vere's mind:

"I pity Mr. Hastings' wife with all my heart."

"Is he good to you, Dora?" he asked, in spite of himself.

She shook her head.

"He is not unkind. We live for ourselves. Each goes their own way. He purchased me as an ornament to his house, and pays me by a lovely frame for my poor face. I despise him utterly; but I ride in his carriage, sit at his table, and spend his money, so I keep to my part of the bargain. Oh, Vere," dropping her proud tone, and speaking like some weary, hunted animal, "I am miserable. If I have sinned I am punished. I have not been married six weeks, and the time seems an eternity."

"It is cruel perversity of fate to bring you to live at my threshold."

"Do you live here?"

"Yes, at Eastcourt. Dora, we must keep our secret, my darling. You and I are better miles apart. I cannot see you constantly—daily, perhaps—and know that never again will you be my own. I shall make some excuse and go away."

Her weakness showed itself then.

"Vere, if you have forgiven me—if you don't despise me utterly—stay. Oh, Vere, in the wretched life to which I have sold myself you will be my only gleam of sunshine. Oh! stay, and let me see you sometimes. I am the most miserable creature on this beautiful earth. Stay near me and be my friend."

She had no idea of the sacrifice she demanded.

"Dora, don't you know I don't think of you as a friend?"

"Thought is free," she said, bitterly, "if all else is captive. Vere, stay! Help me against myself."

Vere Eastcourt's judgment forbade the step. He felt that he and Dora were lovers, not friends, and the proposed rôle was painful to a degree. Yet for her sake he yielded.

"I will stay."

After that both sat silent for some time. They knew that never more must they sit together thus—never more revert to old times and bygone hopes.

This was their adieu as lovers. They would meet next as "friends."

"Vere, don't you think fate has been very cruel to us?"

"Bitterly. We must live it down."

"I think I should have been a good woman if I had married you, Vere. Now I know I never shall."

"My darling, don't talk like this. You are so young."

"That's just it, Vere. I have so many years before me, and through them all I shall long for one touch of your hand and the sound of your voice. It's a pity unhappiness doesn't kill, Vere."

"Aye," he said, hoarsely. "I suppose it's cowardly to wish it did?"

"Then I am a coward, Vere, for I am wishing I could die now with your arms round me."

They did not speak again until presently, when the tears were dry, he pressed a last kiss on her lips, and rose up slowly.

"Good-bye, my darling. Heaven help you, my little lost love. Farewell."

Vere went to Eastcourt, Dora walked slowly back to the Lodge, and an unseen listener, who had made a third at that meeting, likewise went home to luncheon.

CHAPTER XI.

CAUGHT IN HER OWN TOILS.

All my strength and all my art
Is to touch his manly heart.

ROSAMOND STUART had arrived at Eastcourt very soon after Dora Yorke's wedding, and Lady Isabel and Maude were both delighted with their guest, while that home of ease and luxury was simply Paradise to Rosamond after the fifth floor at Château Thierry.

Rosamond had many good qualities. She was amiable, really clever, agreeable, and intellectual; but she was too devoted to herself not to trample on anything which stood in the way of her own interests.

Through life she had been true to one person only, herself.

It was a much more pleasing form of selfishness than Bryan Hastings', but it was certainly more dangerous.

Before she came to Eastcourt Rosamond had a vague liking for Vere, but when she had been there three weeks she made up her mind to spend her life at the grand old place as its master's wife.

She thought this honour within her reach. She had not forgotten the last night of Dora Yorke's maiden life.

She guessed what Vere's mother and sister never dreamed of, that his life held a secret about love and a woman; but Rosamond persuaded herself that Vere had "got over" that little episode. Besides, now Dora was married the field was free.

Rosamond was very clever, but she made one great mistake. Long before she had conquered Vere's affection—while she even confessed he did not love her—she was caught in her own toils.

She loved the handsome master of Eastcourt as her very life, and grew to wish for his love for other reasons than his great possessions. This love might have been the blessing of her life.

It was a selfish love, and so it proved a curse. But for her mad infatuation for Vere Eastcourt we should not have had to write against Rosamond's name that she was a sinner.

Lady Isabel and Maude both gave Rosamond every assistance, little knowing that in promoting their own views they were furthering hers. If ever man were given time, opportunity, and excuse for falling in love Vere was given all three when Rosamond Stuart became his sister's guest.

One morning, when it had been arranged for the three young people to take a long ride together, Maude came down complaining of a headache.

"It need make no difference, Rose," she insisted. "You shall not be disappointed of your ride. Vere will escort you."

So the two started directly after breakfast, mother and daughter standing on the terrace steps to see them off, both thinking how fair and stately a mistress Rosamond would make for Eastcourt.

"Mr. and Mrs. Hastings returned last night, Maude," began Lady Isabel, when the horses were out of sight. "We must call on them to-morrow."

"As you please, mamma."

"You don't seem to care about it, Maude. I fancied you were so anxious to see Mrs. Hastings."

"Rose has told me all about her, mamma. She is sure I shall not like her."

"Why, I thought Rose liked Mrs. Hastings so much. What can possibly have changed her opinion?"

"She does like Mrs. Hastings, only she says she cannot fancy my ever doing so."

"That is wrong," replied Lady Isabel, decidedly. "Rosamond should not prejudice you against your nearest neighbours. I fancy, Maude," continued the mother, slowly, "Rose is a little jealous. She would like to step in between you and Mrs. Hastings, and keep you apart while she herself was the friend of both."

"I don't think so, mamma. What object could she have? When Rose goes back to Paris what can it matter to her if Mrs. Hastings and I are friends or foes?"

"But she may not go back, Maude. How do you think she and Vere get on?"

"I have no idea. He admires her, of course, but who could help that?"

"Well, your headache will give them a long tête-à-tête. You had better lie down, Maude."

They had come in now, and were in their favourite spot for conversation—the pretty morning-room.

"I'd rather stay here, mamma," sitting down at her mother's feet. "I want to talk to you."

"Is there anything the matter, Maude?"

"Nothing," slowly. "I heard from Cecil this morning."

"Why didn't you tell us before, dear?" asked the mother, unsuspiciously. "Vere would have liked to see the letter before he went out."

Maude gave a little squeeze to her treasure, very determined that no eyes but hers should rest upon it.

"Well, what does Cecil say, dear? I suppose poor Harold is not found?"

"Yes, that is, his widow has come forward. He has been dead three years."

"Poor fellow! Ah, then dear Cecil will still be the baronet, and have Lakewood?"

"He will be Sir Cecil still, but not master of Lakewood. Harold Kyrie has left a daughter."

"How strange!" exclaimed her ladyship. "Never, that I have heard, has Lakewood belonged to a woman. There is an old superstition in the family that the first woman who should possess the place should be unhappy, and never live there. Poor Cecil! what a disappointment this is for him!"

"He bears it bravely. Mamma, can't you guess what I am going to tell you?"

Something must have suddenly dawned upon Lady Isabel, for she opened her eyes in amazement.

"Surely, Maude, you don't mean—"

"Yes," interrupted the girl, gently. "He has loved me all his life, as I have him, mother. What does it matter to me that he has lost Lakewood? I could be happy with him in a cottage; but even now he is not a poor man. Mother, aren't you glad? You like Cecil, surely, mother?"

"I love him next to my own children, Maude, and I am very sure he will make you happy. I am not disappointed, but I am most unutterably surprised. I never guessed anything. How long has this been going on?"

"All our lives, I think, mother; but he never told me so till this letter, and now I feel happier than I ever did before. Mother, you and Vere won't let him think Lakewood makes any difference to us?"

"It will make no difference in our affection for him, dear, but I own I should have liked to have seen you and Cecil at Lakewood instead of this strange girl no one knows anything about."

"Poor girl! I wonder how she will enjoy her change of fortune. Cecil is going to write to Vere as soon as he has seen her. He says, mamma, he is sure you will be kind to her."

"Where is she, Maude, and why has Cecil not seen her yet?"

"She is teaching English in a school at Calais, so as her nearest relation Cecil is going to find her. When he has brought her over to England and settled her at Lakewood he is coming here."

Lady Isabel looked gravely at her child.

"It seems a great pity, Maude, you and Cecil care for each other. If only now he could have married this Miss Kyrie, Lakewood and all the fortune might have been kept in the family."

"I can't think it a pity, mother, that Cecil prefers me to Lakewood. I feel quite contented that Dorothea Kyrie should have that so only she leaves me Cecil's love."

"Dorothea? Ah! after her grandmother, of course, poor girl. How old is she, dear?"

"Twenty-two, mamma. I do wish you would have her here. She will be so lonely at Lakewood."

"Maude," replied her mother, laughing, "I am very sorry, but I really cannot turn your brother's house into an asylum for lonely or stray damsels of small means. Remember, dear, only one month of Rosamond's visit has passed, and we invited her for three."

"You don't wish her gone, do you, mamma?"

"I like having her very much, but I must decline inviting Miss Kyrie at the same time. Remember, Maude, I shall have my hands full when Cecil comes, for I quite expect him to take up all your attention."

Maude Eastcourt blushed as girls only can when they are thoroughly in love.

"I wonder how Vere and Rosie are getting on?" was her next irrelevant remark.

If Maude meant how was their ride progressing, the answer was very well indeed. Rosamond, a perfect horsewoman, never looked better than in the saddle.

Vere paid all courteous attention to his fair companion, and Rosamond felt thoroughly happy.

She was too much in love herself, or too anxious about his sentiments, to perceive that the perfect ease and composure of his manner proved that he might be her friend, but, as yet, was certainly not her lover.

"We are all going to do our duty to-morrow," announced Vere, presently.

"Don't we always do it?" asked Rose.

"That's not for me to decide. I meant our social duty. Mr. and Mrs. Hastings came home last night, and to-morrow we must all pay our respects to the bride. You will be invaluable, Miss Stuart, since you know her already."

"Do you like brides?"

"I never knew any; a defect in my education. I should think they were better than bridegrooms."

"I suppose you know Mr. Hastings very well?"

"I have met him frequently for years. My opinion is no one knows him very well. I was very much surprised to hear of his marriage. By-the-bye, whom did he marry?"

"An orphan," purposely ignoring the name. "I suppose she had relatives of some kind, but they were kept decorously in the background. Mamma chose the touseau, Evy and I were bridesmaids, and a friend of Mr. Hastings gave her away."

"I suppose, as your mother associated with her, she must have been a lady? Excuse my saying this, but I am anxious to know something about Mrs. Hastings before I take Maude there to-morrow."

"I am sure Maude will not care for Mrs. Hastings," said Rosamond, decidedly. "She is a lady, and as proud as if she had been an earl's daughter. She seems like a marble statue. I never even saw her smile. Indifference may be carried too far, I think."

They had reached the top of the hill, and stood gazing at the lovely view before them.

"How very beautiful!" cried Rose, who was certainly not given to indifference. "I think people who always live in England must be very happy."

Vere smiled at her enthusiasm.

"You would soon get tired of fine scenery if you lived here. Blankshire would be a wilderness to you after Paris."

She raised her head and looked up into his face with her large blue eyes.

"I don't agree with you, Mr. Eastcourt. I should be too happy to pass my life away from the turmoils of Paris in sweet, peaceful scenes like these."

But Vere did not invite her to pass her life there with him. They had a brisk gallop, and little more talking till they reached home.

Rosamond went into the house to inquire after Maude's headache. Vere strolled into the grounds to meet his first and only love, alas! but to lose her again.

(To be Continued.)

A SORRY FELLOW.

GIRLS, will you listen to a few words of advice? Do not marry if you cannot find a suitable husband, for a bad husband is infinitely worse than none. Never marry a fellow who is ashamed to carry a bundle; who lies in bed until breakfast, and until his father has opened his shop, or office, and swept it out; who frequents taverns, bowling-saloons, prize-fights, etc.; who owes his shoemaker, tailor, washerwoman, jeweller, barber, printer and landlady; and never pays his debts.

Who is always talking about his acquaintance, and condemning them; whose tongue is always running about nonsense; who thinks he is the greatest man in the neighbourhood, and yet whom everyone despises and shuns. We say never marry a fellow with all or any of these qualifications, no matter how handsome he is, or how agreeable he can make himself on occasion. He will make a bad husband.

A RUSSIAN HERO;

OR,

Marko Tyre's Treason.

CHAPTER II.

CATHERINE THE SECOND, Empress of all the Russias, was seated beside an elegantly inlaid table in one of the apartments of the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg.

She was in the full glory of her power as a sovereign, and in the ripest development of her beauty as a woman, but these circumstances did not emancipate her from corroding thoughts and passions.

Her face was singularly stern and her eyes gleamed with deep feelings, in which wrath and surprise were prominent.

"Must these audacious conspiracies against me continue for ever?" she murmured, throwing upon the table a report she had been reading. "I thought I had got rid of them in getting rid of Gradowsky! Why don't these desperate plotters let me alone? Have I not been too lenient in my dealings with them? It is well that my mind is made up to make examples of them hereafter! Let them not complain, if they continue to menace my life and throne, when I send them to the scaffold!"

The sound of footsteps suddenly engaged the attention of the empress, approaching the wide double doors at the end of the apartment.

One of the doors was thrown open gently, and two men entered.

"Captain Marko Tyre," announced the foremost of these men, a chamberlain, bowing profoundly, and at the same time presenting the officer who had followed him into the imperial presence.

The empress made an almost imperceptible gesture, and the chamberlain vanished. Then the sovereign turned a gracious countenance upon the new-comer, who had promptly knelt at her feet.

"I have sent for you, Captain Tyre," said Catherine; commanding him with a gesture to rise, "to render me an important service."

"Your majesty is kindness itself, as well as incarnate glory," returned Captain Tyre, with a sonorous voice that filled the vast apartment. "I am the least of your majesty's subjects, but I yield to none in my zeal and devotion."

The empress smiled still more graciously as she motioned the visitor to take a seat near her.

Sovereign as she was, she was still a woman, and the warmth of Captain Tyre's enthusiasm in her service did not fail to touch her. She scanned his manly form closely—and, indeed, he was a picture well worthy of the imperial lady's admiration.

"Be seated, Captain," she invited.

Marko took the proffered chair, but not without blushing to the roots of his hair at finding himself thus established upon the footing of a favourite.

Then he inclined his head profoundly, listening and holding his breath.

"You are young to be chosen for such work, Captain," resumed the empress, with a heightened glow upon her fair German face and in her eyes.

"Yes, your majesty—barely twenty-two. But service, not age, is the great essential of promotion or favourable regard, and your majesty has been quick to note that I have had the honour to be useful."

"I like you, boy!" said Catherine, with the abrupt frankness which was one of her characteristics. "I see that my recollections of you were quite correct. You are hardy, brave, devoted—lion-like and grand. I see no end to the glorious career that is opening before you."

The young hero lost colour at the fervour of these commendations.

"Spare me, your majesty," he implored, nervously. "If I am anything more than the humblest of the dust at your majesty's feet, it is to the great Catherine that the fact is owing."

The eyes of the empress had scarcely been turned away from the visitor since his entrance, and again her face glowed with a quickened pulsation.

"As I live," she murmured under her breath, "here is that rare avis—a born hero who is also modest, and an honest man who is also a courtier! Orloff himself has not said anything neater for years."

Then she aroused herself to business.

"You have some ambition to rise in the world, of course, Captain Tyre," she demanded, as she toyed with her bracelets, still surveying him admiringly.

"Certainly, your majesty—an ambition to be useful to the great throne your majesty has established and to the great people your majesty has called from nothingness. An ambition to deserve the great Catherine's approval in all the duties intrusted to me."

"Better and better," murmured Catherine, abstractedly. "I believe you are alone in the world, without friends or champions? Have you not lost your parents?"

Marko bowed, a great shadow crossing his features, as if questions of grave import were involved in that inquiry.

"And is there really no one near and dear to you to rejoice in the career upon which you have so commandingly entered?" asked Catherine.

The boyish and yet grand face of our hero brightened, and flushed as if by magic. His tall and robust figure seemed to expand and vibrate with joy. The firm outlines of his features yielded to a smile of ineffable sweetness.

"Yes, your majesty," he acknowledged, with pride and pleasure. "There is one sweet being who, like our gracious empress, deigns to think far better of me than I deserve."

"At an early day you shall tell me all about her, Captain Tyre," said Catherine, graciously. "We will now proceed to business."

Taking a sealed letter from the host of official documents that covered the table, she passed the same to Marko, and said:

"Take this letter to Governor Mosty, at the Fortress, and follow whither he shall lead—to a cell in the prison. The moment he has left you, you will open by yourself this second paper of instructions," and she handed him an official document bearing a seal, "and will at once execute the orders herein given."

Marko stowed away the letters in his pocket, arising to his feet, and commencing a backward movement in the direction of the door by which he had entered.

"As soon as these orders have been executed, Captain Tyre," added Catherine, "you will present yourself here, by virtue of a ring I now give you, and will report to me in person the execution of my wishes. Never mind the late-

ness of the hour. My feelings are enlisted in the business."

Once more Marko bowed low to his sovereign, and then, in obedience to a graceful motion of the imperial hand, he took his departure.

He was in a thrill of joyous excitement.

"How glad Roda will be when she hears how kindly I have been treated!" he said to himself, as he issued from the palace. "All I have to do is to be worthy of the high confidence reposed in me, and my fortune is made."

How bright his life had suddenly become! Not only love, but fortune and power were smiling upon him!

The evening was well advanced, but the theatres had not yet closed, and the palaces of the nobility were brilliantly lighted and peopled, and the streets were as animated and gay as Marko had ever seen them, so that he was lost in the midst of a crowd as he took his way briskly to his destination.

Arriving at the Fortress, or Prison of State, which was then, as now, a vast pile of gloomy and rambling stone buildings upon the right bank of the Neva, Marko lost no time in securing admittance.

The governor was in his office, and received Marko with the respect of a man in high official position.

"I bring a letter from her majesty to your excellency," announced our hero, in brief but courteous phrase, as he handed over the document in question.

Governor Mosty slipped on his spectacles and ran his eyes hastily over the imperial communication.

A single brief tremor shook his frame, and then he seized and lighted a lantern.

"This way, Captain Tyre," he invited.

Passing inward from the office, or reception-room, Governor Mosty led the way into a gloomy corridor which ramified into many others, and turned repeatedly, with various ascents and descents, and finally terminated at the door of an iron-bound dungeon, which lay in deepest blackness, with such slime and dampness oozing from its walls that Marko could not even look at it without a shudder.

He had never before found himself in a place of such terrible appearance.

"No. 47," muttered the governor, elevating his lantern. "This is the place!"

Producing a massive key, Governor Mosty unlocked and opened the door of the dungeon, its hinges grating and squeaking dismally.

"Walk in, Captain," he invited, passing his lantern to Marko. "No. 47 is one of her majesty's 'pet lambs'—as we are in the habit of calling those she deigns to honour with such especial and dangerous attention. My action ends here, Captain Tyre," and he folded up the sheet of instructions Marko had brought him and thrust it into his pocket. "For the rest you have—as I am informed—your own especial instructions."

And with this Governor Mosty retreated in the direction from which he had come.

It was not without deep emotion that Marko stepped into the yawning mouth of the cell, which was even gloomier and damper than the horrible passages by which he had reached it.

He even experienced a thrill of unquiet bordering upon apprehension, the whole situation in which he found himself was so new and so novel.

A scampering of rats startled him as he thus entered the cell.

For a moment his gaze, in the murky dimness around him, which his lantern failed to dissipate, could not make out his surroundings distinctly, and it was not until a human figure started up from the floor, slowly, and with great apparent effort, that his eyes became capable of fixing the dismal aspect of the scene. Then he recoiled abruptly.

"In mercy's name," ejaculated the young officer, excitedly, "am I mad? or am I really face to face with General Gradowsky?"

The figure steadied itself against the wall, coming nearer, and looking all the more ghostly the more plainly it became visible.

It was the figure of a once hearty and robust man, of scarcely more than middle age, but of one who had been rendered prematurely old by imprisonment in the midst of the horrors and rigours by which he was now surrounded.

The face of the prisoner looked as haggard and rigid as the features of a corpse. His eyes were sunken deeply in their sockets, and his frame so weak that he could not hold himself erect without leaning against the wall.

And yet there was apparent in the aspect of this man a rare nobility of character, an unusual intelligence, a dauntless courage, which no amount of persecution could have extinguished, except with his life or reason.

"Yes, I am General Gradowsky," replied the prisoner, hollowly, shading his eyes with his hand from the rays of the lantern, that he might see his visitor, "and you, I see—you are Marko Tyre."

It would have been hard to say which of the two men was the most overjoyed by the meeting. They embraced like men returned from the dead.

"You live, then, General?" cried Marko, holding the wasted form to his heart, while their tears mingled. "What joy to discover the fact and see you again. We all supposed you dead. Even Roda thinks so—or at least fears so—the months have hung so heavily upon her hands since your strange disappearance."

"I have been here ever since my arrest," declared Gradowsky. "I have been accused of awful crimes to the empress, and simulated proofs of my guilt must have been furnished her, to judge by the rigour with which I have been treated. You can see how I have been starved and chilled and tortured. Even my name has been suppressed. I am known here only by the number of my cell—as No. 47! But tell me about my poor Roda, Marko! Is she alive and well?"

"As well as her great grief will allow her to be," answered Marko, "but very unhappy. How could it be otherwise while your fate remains such an incubus upon her? She has died a thousand deaths daily since that awful night."

The prisoner's tears flowed in torrents. His wasted form shook convulsively.

"Perhaps it will cheer you to know, sir," added Marko, after a moment's reflection, "that I have often been with Roda during all these long and terrible months of your absence, and that—and that, in fact, we have learned to think all the world of each other."

"Indeed, Marko?" commented the general, seeming to acquire new life, as he put his hands upon our hero's shoulder, and looked up into his face. "I am glad to hear the dear child has not been friendless. How much you have grown, too! I see you have been promoted, and are now a captain!"

A shadow fell upon Marko's face.

"That brings me back to myself," he exclaimed, with his whole soul a prey to the wildest emotions. Excuse me a moment, General, and I will read my orders—which, no doubt," he added, with a sudden thrill of joy, "concern your restoration to freedom and to Roda. The empress is as good and kind as a mother, and has doubtless assured herself that you have been unjustly imprisoned. Perhaps you have been called to active service. Let's see."

Trembling with eagerness, Marko opened the sealed instructions which had been given him by Catherine. He read as follows:

"With three soldiers of the Fortress, all fully armed, and supplied with cords and weights (to be furnished by Governor Mosty upon demand), you will take this prisoner, No. 47, four versts due west of the extreme point of Kresoffsky Island, there bind him hand and foot, gag him, weight him heavily, and send him to the bottom of the Gulf, waiting, after he has disappeared, thirty minutes before you leave the spot where you last saw him."

The sound that came from the lips of Marko Tyre, as he reached the signature at the bottom of this awful page, seemed scarcely human.

A more painful shock—a more dreadful revolution of feeling—was never given a human being.

"What ails you, boy?" demanded the general. "You are white as a ghost! You tremble. You are ill—dying!"

Marko rallied. A few irrepressible shudders, a single, half-uttered groan, and he stood up calmer and stronger and grander than ever, such was his self-control.

"Let me read you my orders, General Gradowsky," he said. "You will see that they concern us both closely."

He hastened to act upon this proposition.

The agitation of General Gradowsky was no less than his own—the surprise of the prisoner no less.

Nevertheless, the general, after what he had suffered, was naturally less horrified and appalled than his visitor.

"That's all right, Marko," he commented, quietly. "Take me forth. Do your duty. I am only an old man, broken and useless—just ready to tumble into the grave! The Lord will look after my daughter! I go to join my wife in heaven."

"Hush, general," interrupted Marko. "No word more. I have never dreamed of such a fatality as this, but it shall not find me wanting in the qualities and deeds demanded by it! Hush, I say! I have orders to take you forth from this place, General Gradowsky, and I shall take you forth accordingly, but not to the horrible fate commanded—oh, no! I take you forth to freedom—to Roda!"

"Hold, boy! This is treason."

"Yes, general, this is treason! From this moment I turn traitor to her majesty. Not a word more—not a word. No delay—not an instant! I will save you, or die, General. Come!"

A moment later, he went forth from that loathsome dungeon, with Gradowsky leaning heavily upon him.

Horrible destiny! which had forced Marko at the very threshold of a grand career to become a traitor to his sovereign! Thrice horrible destiny! if that treason should not save his friend, and only result in his own destruction!

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

SMALL STEAMBOATS.

I HAVE taken your valuable READER for some years, and the accounts of small steamers and answers in the correspondent column have interested me a good deal, as it is in my line. I have tried both vertical and horizontal in the same boat, and find the latter superior in many respects. The vertical boiler gets steam up to 80lbs. pressure on the square inch in three quarters of an hour, but when the engine was running, even slowly, it primed so bad that we could never tell how the water stood without stopping altogether, as the gauge glass looked as if it was full of soap bubbles; when we stopped at a wharf the steam would rise at a fearful rate, even with the fire almost out and the door open. I have seen it go up from 40lbs to 90 in less than five minutes.

The horizontal boiler takes about two hours to get 60lbs. from cold water, but when running the water does not stand more than half an inch higher in the glass than when standing, and never foams at all. Another advantage which this boiler has over the vertical one is that it stands much lower in the boat, the top of the dome being level with the gunwale, whereas the vertical stood some 18 inches above, which made the boat very crank and hardly safe in a sea.

The engine was built by my brother and myself, most of it of an evening after we were home from work and on holidays; we made our own drawings and patterns, and had the castings and forgings done at the foundry.

The cylinder is four and a half inches diameter, with 5 inch stroke of piston, cutting off at three-quarters stroke; pump five-eighths inch diameter by 5 inches stroke. We usually ran her at 300 or 400 revolutions a minute with 75lbs. steam. The boiler is horizontal, 2 feet 6 inches diameter and 3 feet long, 4 feet over all, with a 6 inch smoke box at each end; there is a flue right through the boiler, 15 inches diameter, and return tubes which are also 3 feet long, one and three-quarter inch outside diameter. There are 18 tubes, but the boiler would have been better if there were 6 more. The boat is wood, diagonal built, 24 feet keel, 26 feet 5 inches over all, 5 feet 8 inches beam over board, 3 feet 9 inches deep; built with very fine lines both fore and aft.

The propeller is 2 feet diameter and 3 feet pitch. With a 4 bladed propeller, 3 feet pitch, we ran the measured mile (6,080 feet) with tide, carrying 80lbs. steam, in ten minutes. Not being satisfied with this performance, we cut two blades off, when, with 2 bladed propeller, 3 feet pitch, we ran the same distance, with the same pressure, in slack water, in 8 minutes and 40 seconds. In this case the tide had just turned and was slightly against us.

We also tried a three-bladed propeller, 2 feet diameter, 2 feet 10 inches pitch, when she ran the mile in 8 minutes and 55 seconds with the tide, carrying 75lbs. steam. From the above it will be seen that the 2 bladed screw gave the best results.—S. E.

UTILISING THE TIDES.

A DISCOVERY is reported by a newspaper of Chicago to have been made by a Mr. Stempel of that city, which eclipses not only the electric light, but telephones, phonographs, and all the wonderful inventions of the day. Mr. Stempel proposes not only to light, but also to heat and furnish water for the whole of the United States by one immense and magnificent scheme.

His proposition is that the tides of the ocean can furnish a constant and unlimited power which can by friction be converted into any amount of electricity for the purpose of creating light, heat and power for the use of man. He proposes to build immense basins in the sea, in the shallow of an inlet near the shore, where there are high floods. Two walls are to be built strong enough for the purpose. One will be built at the mouth of the inlet to shut off the sea; the other a certain distance apart, to divide the inlet into two basins. Each wall will have a floodgate, through which, when open, the sea can flow in. At high tide the floodgate nearest the land is shut. Six hours after, at ebb-tide, the gate of the outer basin is closed, and thus Mr. Stempel will have one great basin full of water.

Smaller gates in the wall of the first basin are then opened, and the water rushes through, turning as it runs a thousand turbine wheels, which in their turn keep in motion the electrical machines from which it is proposed to generate sufficient electricity to furnish the entire country with light, heat, and motive power. The cost will, it is estimated, not exceed four hundred millions—quite a trifle. Here's a cheque.

A SIMPLE contrivance for converting common shells into incendiary projectiles has been successfully tried at the Woolwich proof butts. The shell is charged with pieces of port-fire or star-composition rod, each piece about three inches in length, and gunpowder is then poured in to fill up the interstices and form the bursting charge. On being fired into a building or into the midst of an ammunition train, the charge is ignited by a time fuse or percussion fuse, and the shell not only bursts into a hundred fragments, scattered in all directions, but distributes more than a hundred flaming port-fires, each burning fiercely for sufficient time to ignite any inflammable object with which it may come into contact. The ordinary field-gun projectiles have been used in this way as well as the high-flying shells of the 6.3 inch howitzer, and both have answered well.

AN ELECTRIC SPARK PEN.—A. M. Bailey, of Paris, has invented an electric spark pen which possesses some points of interest. If a sheet of thin paper is attached to a plate of copper or zinc, it is stated that an engraving may be made with extraordinary facility by means of this pen. If one of the poles of a Ruhmkorff machine is attached to the plate and the other to the upper end of the pen, the current will run through, and in the drawing the paper is perforated. When the drawing is finished, ink is laid on with an ordinary roller, and the greasy fluid penetrates through the holes. The plate is then plunged in water, which detaches the paper, and it is ready for emersion in the acid. The advantage claimed for this method is that the artist does all parts of his work, and has no more trouble than if he were working with an ordinary pencil. He can even work in a dark room without any other light than the glare from the induction spark.

YOUNG MEN MUST WORK BY SYSTEM.

If you would achieve any high distinction in this life you must begin when young and pursue your work systematically, day after day, month after month, and year after year. He who works only impulsively and spasmodically—though he possess good natural parts—will accomplish but little. Feelings vary—the state of hope fluctuates, in most persons, greatly.

If a young man desists from his efforts whenever things look dark and gloomy, he will find, after the lapse of a few years, that much precious time has been thrown away. It is easy to work with a bright prospect of great reward immediately before one's eyes. But the world is not so constituted as to admit of this, as a general thing. Large diamonds do not lie scattered around promiscuously on the face of the earth, where anyone may stretch forth his hand and pick them up. They have to be delved for—not only in the dark, but in uncertainty.

Uncertainty! That is the great peril to the human soul. The stout heart too often grows weak and faint because the goal is not plainly to be seen, but is obscured by mists and clouds.

Push on, oh young man!—the prize is before you, whether with dim, mortal vision you are enabled to see it or not.

Work resolutely for some great purpose in life; make up your mind to that at the start; and then never relinquish it. But remember the infirmities of your own nature, to guard against them.

Remember that hours of despondency will come, and days from which the light will seem to be utterly shut out.

Therefore, if you would make sure of great results, learn early to work from habit. Let every night find the day's allotted task done, whether you have felt like doing it or not.

In this way, and this way only, can the world's greatest works be accomplished.

BOUND TO THE TRAWL.

By the Author of "Clytie Cranbourne," "The Golden Bowl," "Poor Loo," etc.

CHAPTER LIII.

BASIL ROSSBURN.

True conscious honour is to feel no sin;
He's arm'd without that's innocent within
Be this thy screen and this thy wall of brass.

"KATIE says she has dined, and begs that we not wait for her," said Minnie Garland, returning to the dining-room, and resuming her seat with evident reluctance.

So the meal went on. Neither Percy nor Max had much appetite, and both of them felt a sense of relief when the ladies rose and left the room, for they could very soon afterwards follow them.

In the drawing-room Katie was seated, and Amy, as she entered it, met her, and without this time intending to be rude, stared at her in genuine surprise; five years had made a wonderful change and improvement in the fisherman's grand-daughter.

"Not much chance for me while she and Minnie are by," was Amy's mental soliloquy, but she was polite and civil enough: rudeness could avail her nothing—nay, it would do her harm, for the sceptre had dropped from her hand, and even her vanity and egotism were not strong enough to persuade her that it would ever return.

Those who cannot swim must float and drift with the current if they would not sink, and Amy had begun of late bitterly to realise that she was powerless to shape events according to her own will and purpose.

Mrs. Garland received Katie warmly. She was always glad for the girl to be at the Willows, indeed, she regarded her almost as a member of the family, and Amy's jealous nature at once prompted her to feel that Kate had robbed her of the affections and the home that should by right have been hers.

Having no sympathy with the group by the fireplace, she seated herself at the piano and began to play and sing till the entrance of the gentlemen induced her to turn round and watch the greeting which Katie met with from each in turn.

The colonel kissed her as though she had been his own daughter.

Percy took her hand and held it much longer than for such a commonplace action seemed necessary.

But when he moved aside and Max von Konig stood before her, Katie's face became suddenly pale, her eyes dilated, her breath came short and quick, and with an effort she said:

"Basil Rossburn!"

"Yes!" he exclaimed, a glad flush on his face, and a light in his splendid eyes as he sprang forward and clasped both her hands in his own. "And you?" he asked, eagerly; "are you really little Katie who was so kind to me, and whom I loved so dearly?"

"Yes; I am Katie Jessop, Chris Growler's niece. But, Basil," and her face changed, and a death-like pallor came over it as she continued, "where have you been? Do you know what you have come back to meet? But I forgot. This is your father!" Then turning to Colonel Chartres, she said: "This is Basil Rossburn, my uncle's apprentice, and your son!"

Then she sank into a chair; the horror of that crime on board the "Pretty Kitty" coming back to her now, after a lapse of six years, with a sense of accumulated, rather than lessened, repulsion.

Forgetful of all things else but that he had found his long sought son, the colonel sprang forward, grasped his hand with one of his own, and putting the other tenderly upon his shoulder as though he would have liked to embrace him, he said:

"I felt it. I could convince myself of it by no course of reasoning or prove it by inquiry, but something in my heart told me that you were my son."

"Father!" said the young man, dreamily. "I never knew a father. The man who has been most tender and kind to me stands here," and he put his hand lovingly upon that of Von Guilderstein; "he saved my life and made it worth living for," he added.

"Lieben Max," said the old German, affectionately, "thou wilt always be my son. The sea gave thee to me, but if the Herr Colonel can prove thou art his child, I shall love thee none the less. But this young lady's assertion is not sufficient; how can she know?"

"She is right. I am Basil Rossburn, or the workhouse founding that was known by that name. But why are you so sad, Katie?" he asked, "and why do you all look so strangely at me?"

For after the first greeting, even Colonel Chartres had shrunk back. That deed of blood seemed, as it were, to stand between the young man and those who knew of it.

Percy Rossburn here stepped forward. He might not have been prepossessed with the young stranger at first, indeed, he was not, but justice to him and to everyone connected with him, demanded that everything should be cleared up satisfactorily, and at once.

Offering his hand to the young man, he said cordially:

"If Miss Katie is not mistaken, and you acknowledge that you once bore the name of Basil Rossburn, we must be cousins, and as such, should be friends."

"Yes," returned Basil, as we may as well call him now. He spoke doubtfully, but he returned the grip.

"And as there is so much at stake, and so many are involved in this matter," continued the barrister, "I think if we were all to sit down and recount such parts of the story as we are personally acquainted with, we should all the sooner arrive at a clear understanding of the whole. Perhaps, uncle, you will begin."

Colonel Chartres bowed, and as briefly as possible gave an account of his private marriage and the mysterious disappearance of his wife, when, too, he knew she was soon to become a mother.

Then Percy took up the tale, speaking of the anger of the young wife's father and brother, and the belief of the Rossburn family that she had eloped with Chartres, hence they took no steps to find her.

Next he detailed how he and the colonel, through the aid of detectives, traced the poor lady, and identified her with one who had been killed in a railway accident, leaving a living child behind her.

He told of the journey which he and his uncle had made to the scene of the accident; how he had gone to the workhouse, and finally to Great Barmouth, and described their visit to Captain Growler's cottage.

"But for that, we should never have known Miss Katie," he said, with a smile that soon gave place to a look of gravity, as he remembered that the worst part of his narrative had still to be recounted.

It was told at last, however. The horrible crime that had just been committed when Colonel Chartres and he arrived, and the fact that the verdict at the coroner's inquest was one of "Wilful Murder" against Basil Rossburn.

Basil looked pale and anxious as he said:

"It is my turn now. You shall hear my version of the story."

But Katie here interrupted him.

"I always maintained you were innocent, Basil. Aunt Meg fully believed in you too. What we really feared was that you had likewise been murdered."

"And I very nearly was," he answered, calmly. "Minnie knows the story, I told her this morning, though I may not have mentioned the name which I bore, otherwise, knowing both stories, she must surely have recognised their identity with each other. But I will repeat it, and my uncle can confirm part of it."

Then he went back in memory to his earliest recollections of life in the workhouse, of his being "Bound to the Trawl," and of his detestation of his trade. He spoke gratefully of Katie's sympathy and kindness, and briefly described all that happened previous to that never-to-be-forgotten night when he was attacked from behind in the dark, and heard Crabtree's voice hissing in his ear:

"You'll not stand in my way again in this world."

Through the story just as he had told it to Minnie, but with more detail, he now went, and when he paused, Herr von Guilderstein corroborated all he knew of it.

A pause followed, then Percy said:

"It's very awkward and unpleasant, but it will be much better for you to give yourself up at once to answer the charge against you. The worst of it is they won't accept bail. If it were my case I should go down to Scotland Yard to-night, only I doubt if they will give you very pleasant quarters. You see if they find and

arrest you here the appearances against you will be strengthened by the assertion that you were evading justice, now that you are aware of the charge. After all, a night more or less on a hard bed isn't much, is it?"

"No," said Basil, wearily; "I have had hard nights enough, and days too for that matter. And you are quite right, I will go at once."

"Stop," said his father; "we will go too; Herr von Guilderstein and Percy and I. It is hard to find you, my son, only to lose you again, but the parting will not be for long, be sure of that."

"I am sure," was the reply; "my helplessness when I was found would surely of itself, even without the absence of any motive on my part for the crime, prove my innocence. Poor little Charley Crisp! I was so fond of the boy."

Then they got on their coats and prepared to start, while Basil stuffed two or three necessities into a bag, and provided himself with a travelling rug; unlike his companions, he could not look forward with any confidence to sleeping in a comfortable bed that night.

Minnie was in tears, and Katie tried in vain to console her.

It did indeed seem a terrible thing that her lover, the man to whom she had not been engaged twenty-four hours, should be hurried off to a prison, to answer for a cruel crime.

Unreasonably enough, she thought a good deal of it was Percy Rosburn's fault, not recognising as all the rest did, that his advice was the best and most sensible that could be given.

That night was a gloomy one at the Willows. All the gentlemen started for town, and George Garland was the only one that returned home, the others deciding to remain at an hotel in town, so as to be there early in the morning.

"Poor Max—or Basil, as I suppose we must now call him," said George, "looked awfully blue when the man came with his keys to lock him up, though they were civil enough. I don't suppose it will be more than a formal thing after all. I don't see how they can punish a man for being nearly killed himself."

Speculations which afforded but small comfort to his sorrowing sister.

"I wish to goodness," said George Crabtree, "that I could be found," said Katie, desperately. "I fear he must have emigrated. If his guilt were proved, so at the same time, Basil's innocence would be made clear. I wonder where he can be, whether he is dead or alive."

Alive enough without doubt, as she will soon have occasion to know.

CHAPTER LIV.

MINNIE IS TROUBLED.

There is no courage but in innocence,
No constancy but in an honest cause.

It cannot be a very pleasant thing to stand in the prisoner's dock in that stuffy little police court at Bow Street, with every curious eye in the place staring at you, and worse than all to know that there is such restraint on your freedom of action that, desire it as you may, you cannot leave the spot upon which you have been ordered to stand.

Something of this must have been in the mind of Basil Rosburn as he stood there pale and grave, but with strange doubts of his own sanity and the reality of things, which blunted if they did not altogether remove the sense of humiliation that would otherwise have overwhelmed him.

He seemed to have lived two lives, each utterly distinct from the other.

First that of the workhouse child and fisherman's apprentice, next that of a highly cultivated gentleman, and yet, neither condition appeared to have much in common with his present position.

For four years had he laboured as an apprentice to the trawler; for six years he had studied

in schools and universities, lived with cultured men and women, thought their thoughts, lived their lives, and imbibed their prejudices like one to the manner born; then came the revelation that such a life as he had last lived was what, but for cruel fate, should have been his from his birth, coupled with the knowledge that he stood accused of one of the most heinous crimes that the law of man can punish.

What had occurred that night that was his last on board the "Pretty Kitty" had, whenever he tried to think of it, been a mystery to him.

He remembered only that Charley Crisp had been sent down to the rope room by Crabtree to fetch something, then that he was himself attacked from behind, and that in the struggle to save himself he received out after out, until at last, weakened and overpowered, he was pushed over the side of the smack, falling, as he supposed, into a boat which afterwards drifted with him out to sea.

And so it appeared now, poor Charley had been murdered the same night; Crabtree was still at large, and he, who had so nearly been a second victim, and was doubtless to be the principal one, was here to bear the penalty of another's crime.

Where was justice, where was common-sense? many people had asked when those twelve enlightened jurymen at Great Barmouth had recorded a verdict against the one apprentice simply because he was missing.

Perhaps some of them objected to capital punishment, and thought that the missing youth if dead, could not, and if living, would not, return to suffer it.

This at any rate is the result. Basil has given himself up to justice directly he heard the crime imputed to him, and Percy with other able legal advisers at his side, is asking the magistrate to hear the case in private on the plea that the ends of justice may be thwarted if at this stage of the case all the details are made public.

After some questioning the magistrate consents, and Basil is allowed to leave his uncomfortable post and go with his father and cousin and Von Guilderstein to the private room of "his worship."

The interview is not a long one.

Basil is in the position of a man standing forward to challenge investigation rather than of one shrinking from the ordeal, while the romance of his early life and his present social position all go towards making the by no means sentimental stipendiary as courteous and considerate as possible.

Then the matter was adjourned pending inquiries, and the colonel informed his son that he would probably have to go to Barchester, the assize town, twenty miles from Great Barmouth, there to stand his trial.

After this Basil was taken away to the House of Detention, and the two old men, Chartres and Von Guilderstein, both feeling as though they had been robbed of the one human being who was dearest to them, went back, sorrowing if not despondent, to the Willows.

"And this is your English justice!" exclaimed the old German, contemptuously. "Ah! bah! I do spit upon it, I do!"

It was vain to tell him that justice in this land was the same for the rich and the poor; he would not listen to or believe it, and when also assured that Basil must soon be free, he gesticulated violently, and too excited to speak in any but his native language, expressed his very distinct and decided opinion that the law of no country, with even the pretence of civilisation, could condemn his boy, and that his surrendering himself as he had done the night before was a piece of folly and quixotic absurdity.

A very sad party was that assembled at the Willows this night.

Minnie's eyes were red and swollen with weeping. Surely no maiden could ever suffer as she suffered. So, at least, she told herself.

To win a lover one day and to lose him the next, was, it must be confessed, hard on any girl and very inconsiderate of fate in this particular instance; the worst of it too was that

Minnie very unreasonably blamed her dearest friend, Katie Jessop, as responsible in a great measure for the calamity that had befallen her.

"How could you recognise Max as Basil so easily?" she asked, in an injured tone. "It is years since you last saw him, and he must have changed wonderfully."

"Yes, dear, he has, and he has not," replied Katie, gently, sympathy and affection for her friend making her ignore any apparent unkindness or unreasonable fretfulness of tone.

"What do you mean?" gloomily. "How—in what way has he changed and yet remained so easily recognisable?"

"He is taller, more manly, and there is an air of distinction, combined with refinement and intellectual power, about him, that, although not altogether wanting before, was not so strongly marked or so clearly expressed as now. But you must not suppose, Minnie," with a gentle smile, "that Basil was ever a coarse, vulgar, common-looking boy. His handsome face and gentle manners made the other lads jealous, and won my aunt Meg's heart at once, and I believe among themselves the men and boys used to call him 'gentleman Jack'; not in derision, but because he was so unlike those with whom he was obliged to associate."

"But you recognised him at once, though he was dressed so differently, and as you yourself admit, greatly changed."

"Of course I did; as I have explained, the change, as you call it, was nothing more than might be expected from the lapse of time, which last has been spent under conditions that have brought about a very marked improvement in the youth I once knew well. We had lived in the same house together when he was on shore for nearly four years. He must have been about eighteen when we lost him, and the youth of that age is a very distinct and clear promise of what the man of twenty-four will be."

"And he was very fond of you, wasn't he, Katie?" in a pathetic tone that showed this was after all the sorest part of the wound.

"Yes," was the frank reply, "he was very fond of me. Had I been his only sister he could not have loved me better. And I was like a sister to him. We were too old to play at marbles or fly kites, or keep shops, or have dolls' houses; we were both of us bitten with the desire for learning. Without knowing the old aphorism that 'knowledge is power,' we felt it to be so. Nay, it was to us the very breath of life, and we read and learnt and wondered at all there was to learn, and though I am far behind him now, no doubt I was quite as far ahead of him then, and could even help and teach him. And you know, Minnie," with a deprecatory smile, "I was as unlike the daughters and sisters of the other fishermen, however well off they might be, as Basil was to the other apprentices, and so it was but natural we two should care a great deal for each other. And besides I told you how Basil once saved me from worse than death."

"Then you still love him?" piteously. "I shan't have the least chance against you, Katie."

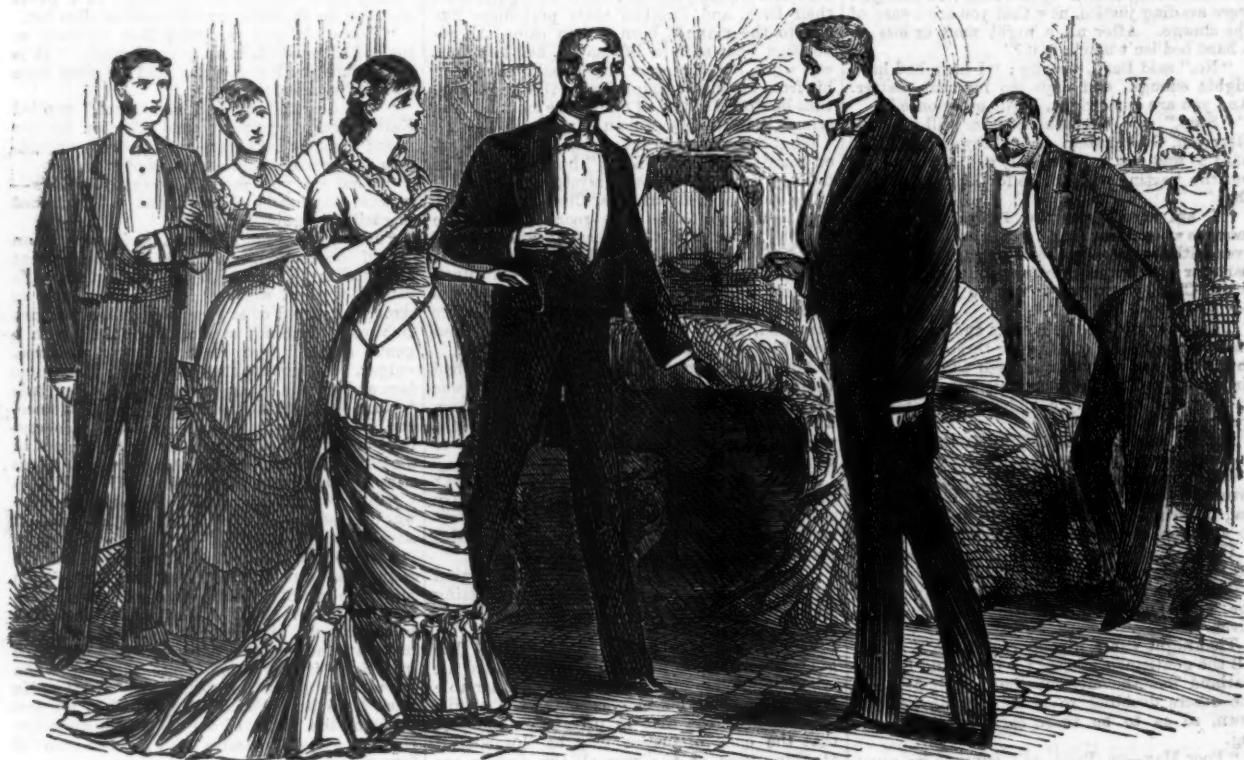
"I sincerely hope you won't, dear, nor do I see why you should object to my loving my old companion as a dear brother. I have a very great affection for him as I believe he has for me."

"Yes, but that isn't it. Uncle always looked forward to your marrying his son if he ever found him. I've heard him say so dozens of times, and that was one reason why he did not more positively object to Percy hovering about you, and neither of you seeming to be able to make up your minds that you cared enough for each other to get married."

Katie flushed crimson at this, but Minnie paying no heed to it, went on:

"Of course, if I'd known that Max was Uncle Basil's lost son, I should have remembered he was your property, and not have thought of him for myself, but as it is it's miserable—miserable." And she burst into tears.

Unfeeling though it might seem, Katie could not forbear a low laugh as she said:



[FOUND AT LAST.]

"You little goose, don't you see that you are making yourself miserable for nothing at all. Basil doesn't want to marry me, and I don't want to marry him; indeed I never did. I never thought of such a thing till your uncle put the idea into my head, and then I took care not to say anything to show my objection to such a step, first because Basil was not to be found, and we feared he was dead, and secondly, because I fancied a preference I had for somebody else would not be so easily discovered if I did not dispel the illusion about my old companion. Now, I have confessed everything, so do try to be cheerful and look forward to your beloved's speedy return to liberty and love."

"But, Katie," in a less doleful tone, "do you think it was absolutely necessary for him to go to prison?"

"Well, dear, if he had not done so voluntarily, and anyone besides myself had recognised him and given information to the police, they would have arrested him, and it would have been said he was hiding from justice."

"But couldn't he have gone to Germany and written over to say what he knew about it, and that he didn't commit such a dreadful crime? Don't you think he might have been spared this degradation of appearing in the police-courts? It seems horrible that an innocent man should be treated exactly like one that is guilty."

"Your suggestion about Germany is quite impracticable, my dear; it is very painful to all of us, but it can't be helped. I suppose he will have to stand his trial at Barchester. We will go down to Barmouth, Minnie. Poor Aunt Meg! what a fury she will be in with her husband. He was the foreman of the jury that returned that preposterous verdict, and aunt nearly refused to marry him in consequence. I fear when the news of Basil's return reaches them he won't have a very pleasant time of it."

"Serve him right," more vindictively than one would have thought possible from Minnie.

Then she added, as she heard a familiar knock at the house door. "That is Percy Rosburn; he will be able to tell us more than uncle could do. I have always thought Percy wonderfully clever; now he will have a chance of proving it."

A few seconds later the young man entered the room where the two girls were.

His face was clouded; he was very taciturn. After asking him numberless questions, and only receiving the very briefest replies, it suddenly dawned upon Minnie's mind that her absence would be more welcome to these two than her society at the present moment, and, making some trivial remark about wanting cotton for her lace-work, she got up and left the room.

When they were alone, Percy seemed to breathe more freely, but his conversation was about nothing more strictly personal than the troubles of poor Basil.

"It will break his father's heart if things go against him," said the young man, sadly.

"Yes, and it will kill Minnie," assented the girl. "You know," she went on, "they are engaged to be married."

"Are they?" with a glad start of surprise.

"I thought—I have heard my uncle say—"

"Yes, I know," continued the girl, nervously, "but it was quite a mistake. Basil and I were like brother and sister; we were quite children in those days. I have explained it all to Minnie's entire satisfaction, so the course of true love in this case will run smoothly enough as soon as Basil is free. Oh, I hope that time may not be far distant."

"So do I, but you have taken a load of doubt and misery from my mind, Katie. I don't deserve it—I am not worthy of you; but is it possible—?"

"Colonel Chumleigh!" announced a servant, new to his situation this very day, and the red-faced Indian officer followed close on the mention of his name to find himself in the presence of two perfect strangers.

Katie, vexed though she might be, rose to her feet, while the fiery-looking colonel stared

at her in a manner which made Percy feel as though he would like to take him by the scruff of the neck and just drop him into the river at the foot of the garden.

Being unable to do this, however, he favoured the intruder with a stare which seemed to ask with more pertinence than politeness what on earth he wanted there, till the names of Mrs. Garland and Colonel Chartres being uttered by the stranger, Katie smiled as though she did not wish him at Jericho or any other place equally distant, offered him a seat and rang the bell for the servant to acquaint the colonel and his sister of the presence of this visitor.

Unfortunately Colonel Chumleigh had been invited to dinner at the Willows this very evening, a fact that had quite escaped the memory of his host in the excitement that the discovery of his long-lost son had created, and now it was with a feeling akin to dismay that he saw his old comrade before him.

Colonel Chartres' first impulse was to take his brother officer into another room, tell him the whole story as an excuse for not asking him to remain, and so get rid of him, but Amy Garland put this idea to flight by at once devoting herself to the entertainment of the stranger. That her uncle had found a son to love him again, and Minnie had shared the same bad fortune with regard to a lover, was no reason why she should not amuse herself when she had a chance.

Thus Colonel Chumleigh remained in blissful ignorance of being considered a bore and a nuisance, and though he did wonder what had become of Minnie, who did not put in an appearance, and was surprised to find the old German staying here without his nephew, still he attached no great importance to either circumstance.

He earned Percy Rosburn's hearty malediction, however, through having been the innocent means of interrupting an answer to that question of his, and for having, effectually, for that night, at least, prevented its repetition.

(To be Continued.)



[A DAUGHTER OF HETEL.]

LADY VIOLET'S VICTIMS.

CHAPTER XXII.

TO SAVE HIS LIFE.

I am one
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

A FEW days after the most violent forms of the fever had subsided, Aphra sat by Lionel's bedside in the miserable lodgings watching the havoc worked by illness in his features with a sick and fainting heart. He was still dangerously ill and weak; her child, her idol, the one love of her existence whose life hung on a thread, was now too poor to buy even the common necessities of existence, so Aphra sold the little anchor for a couple of sovereigns. It was worth eight guineas, but why not rob an excited gipsy when you can get the chance? And this money went in paying the rent and buying a little food.

Mrs. Mudberry was not a creature of sentiment, and for a lodger to be laid up on her washing days, when the tailor persisted he would leave if that Heathen Chinese remained another week, was enough to irritate any average female.

Aphra could hardly understand the vulgar motives that rule women of Mrs. Mudberry's type. She could be fierce and revengeful herself in a grand, reckless way, but then she could not be harsh to a suffering being who had never injured her. What were the hearts of these Christians made of, she thought, kneeling by Lionel's side in the twilight, and changing the vinegar rage on his temples.

"Ah, my darling! my Lionel!" she sighed, "all this misery comes from that marriage with the earl's daughter. We were so happy together before that. I knew no good would come of it. The poor young lady will very likely die, and as for you, my angel—"

"Here, gipsy," cried a strong voice at the door, "you're wanted."

Aphra rose, and, glancing back fondly at Lionel, softly closed the door. Her enemy, Mrs. Mudberry, awaited her outside.

"I ain't a goin' to 'ave this sort o' thing any longer, gipsy," said the landlady, fiercely. "You've bin into my kitchen and actually stole a cup o' broth from my saucepan as is simmerin' with soup for our Sunday's dinner. Oh! don't deny it, we saw the drippin's of the cup on the stove, and then you creep upstairs like a panther a muttering to yerself, as frightens Mudberry and the children out of their senses, but all gipseys are thieves, 'tis their nature; perhaps you stole him as you make such a fuss of him. But you must leave my place or I shall lose my lodgers."

Aphra sat down glaring at Mrs. Mudberry as if not quite comprehending. The tears almost gathered in her large dark eyes; it was very hard.

"We cannot leave till my son is well," she said, pressing her hands to her temples.

"Why ain't there a hospital for the likes o' you?"

"No, not for him," said Aphra, thoughtfully; "my darling shall never be—"

"And pray why shouldn't a gipsy's son have the same lot as other gipseys; wasn't he born in a ditch, or a hen house, or a barn, or van? Ugh! I like your impudence. Where's yer gratitude to Providence and the Parliament and the gentlemen as makes the laws, if yer won't take him to a hospital or a work-us as is free to all."

"No," said Aphra, "he shall stay here." She thought, poor thing, in her ignorance that a simple refusal to leave was sufficient.

"Hoighty-toighty, ma'm, stay here indeed! Where's yer weddin' ring, and you a layin' down the lora to me, when I hates yer like poison."

"Yes, so do I," said Aphra, feeling the edge of her dagger, and smiling to herself. Mrs. Mudberry saw the action and shuddered.

"Put the knife up, gipsy, and don't you be a

grinnin' at me; a honest married woman ain't goin' to be stabbed to the heart by a savage as can't read or write; why where was yer reared, I wonder?"

"Among the mountains, among the warm breathing loveliness of the heather, with dew-washed flowers for a pillow, and the grass my carpet," said Aphra, in her poetic way, her voice faltering. "Where the air of Heaven is free and pure to all, with the sky for my roof, and our wild tribe my friends."

She threw herself on the hearth-rug and the blue black coils of her magnificent hair streamed to her waist in tawny waves. Mrs. Mudberry seated herself on her own armchair, and contemplated a picture of Noah leaving the Ark worked in very bad crayons.

"You will have to leave, gipsy."

"Not till he is better," Aphra answered from the rug.

"Then I shall expel you by force."

"No, you won't," said Aphra, rising and tossing back her hair. "I defy you, coward and idiot. I've dared too much before in my time to be frightened away from here by you."

Mrs. Mudberry paled; this physical fury alarmed her; she thought of the police for the first time with respectful longing.

"You'd better go to yer patient, gipsy, he seems inclined to be noisy;" and Mrs. Mudberry discreetly retired.

"Mother," said Lionel, raising himself from the pillow. "I've heard all; let us go, we will not wait to be kicked out; a hospital will be far preferable to insult."

Aphra sobbed a little, holding his hand; it was strangely wasted. She looked into the sick man's eyes with a passion of grief. Never had he more resembled his father. It was the ghost of the proud Sir Phoenix who regarded her with haggard eyes; his cheeks were flushed with feverish excitement as he said:

"Give me pen and ink, mother. I will just write a few lines to Sir Hugh Allerton; he will help me—help me to regain my Constance."

Oh! my thirst; for mercy's sake get me something to relieve it."

Aphra started at the name. He was going to entreat his brother's aid! His brother!

"You will write to Sir Allerton! Is he not some proud and haughty nobleman, who will consider you are taking a liberty in addressing him?"

Lionel laid back on his pillow and sighed. He was still exhausted from weakness. He had scarcely strength to collect his thoughts, and yet such is instinct, he looked to the young baronet to save him from destitution—to come to him in their hour of need, for he read aright that generous, impulsive nature, and believed Sir Hugh would never turn from a fellow-creature in distress. His kind words returned and soothed Lionel.

He closed his eyes as Aphra left the room to bring him the necessary writing materials. Mrs. Mudberry now appeared, and standing by Lionel's side, said, with a smile:

"I'm glad you're better to-day, sir."

"No doubt you will the sooner be rid of us," he answered, quietly. His thin hands, attenuated by fever, lay on the counterpane in listless weakness.

"That there Aphra's a bin using strong words to me, sir, and I can't abide it, and if you was only to see the breakages—the tumblers, and the jugs, and the dishes in the kitchen that haythen breaks, cracks and destroys—why a week's rent won't replace 'em—you wouldn't think I was 'and in my charges, or that I was so anxious to be rid of yer."

How he loathed this dreadful woman's gossip. He longed for peace and repose. He had that instinctive dislike to her, that made him shudder at the hideous taste of the rooms, the small, square deal table, the ugly horse-hair chairs, the yellow, bilious-looking curtains, the rickety three-legged sofa, in the dim recesses of which spiders held their court, and black beetles revelled undisturbed.

His bed-room, with its shaky iron bedstead, was small and stuffy. If he opened the window the rain beat in on him, and if it were closed he was nearly suffocated. He, who had been used to the mountain air in his boyhood, and the raptures of soft, balmy morning, welcomed in by the tremulous whispers of wild flowers, as the wind rocked them gently against the porch.

How he longed again for a glimpse of the deep woods and glades; the long avenues of oak and elm; the clear, unclouded skies; the scent of violets; the songs of birds.

"I am expecting a visit from someone, Mrs. Mudberry," he said, after a pause, while his landlady pounced on a benighted moth that was trying to reach the window.

"Ah, indeed, some of yer relations, mebbe—another gipsy. There's a bellhanger called Hargrave in the next street, p'raps it's 'im."

"The gentleman whom I expect is called Sir Hugh Allerton."

Aphra, standing at the door with paper and ink, saw Mrs. Mudberry change colour.

"A real live baronet, sir. Well, ain't this a romance, and you so weak too. Why, o' course we shall show him up to yer when he calls. Sir Hugh Allerton! Oh, I shan't forgit the name."

"And now, Mrs. Mudberry, you may go, and don't bang the door, please."

Aphra placed the desk on a little table by his side, as he said:

"Are there no letters for me?"

He was thinking of his wife, and if his communication to the commissioners had been regarded.

"No, Lionel. See, I have brought you some lemonade, it will quench your thirst. What is there you would fancy, my son?"

"The only thing I believe would reduce this consuming fever, mother, and perhaps save my life, would be grapes. I seem to long for them. I dream of them. I see them in my slumbers growing on vines in splendid profusion all round me. They wave above my head, but evade my grasp."

"You shall have some," said Aphra, kissing his hand.

She had touched no food for hours, but she never let Lionel know of her privation. Hunger and want were not unknown to Aphra. She bent over him, and strained him to her breast as in the old days when he was a child. She lifted the damp hair from his clammy brow. All the rich tints of his complexion were blanched to deadly pallor.

"This is Meredith's work," he said, sinking down on his hard pillow, "and she has escaped her pursuers. She warned me her vengeance would be fatal this time, which maybe, it is. If I only knew that my Constance could be ministered to, as I am, by loving hands! but alas! I fear the reverse, and this dread notion retards my recovery, and makes me long to sink into the tomb."

"Try and live for her," said Aphra, "she will need your aid. Be brave, my Lionel, as you have ever been. Fate is not so hard as to let you both be for ever sundered. I feel sure you will both meet again."

Her words calmed him. Aphra now stole from the room to bring him some little refreshment, and then whispered:

"I am going out to get you some grapes, Lionel, with your letter to Sir Hugh Allerton, my dearest, and trust that happiness will soon return to you and Lady Constance."

She threw on her heavy cloak, and crept downstairs, and was soon out into the street. The noise and bustle always stunned and dazed Aphra, and perhaps her poor brain was weak from want of food. She muttered to herself many times:

"Grapes will surely save his life; he has touched nothing for hours. His pulse grows feebler with every passing minute. Oh! what shall I answer to the dead man I have injured—the man who told me he was an earl—Sir Phoenix Allerton, if we meet in another world, when he says to me, 'What have you done with my son—my first-born—my Lionel?'"

The thought pierced her ignorant soul like a knife. She remembered how she had knelt at the haughty baronet's feet, and begged him to be kind to her a little longer for her great love's sake, warning him she was a gipsy who laughed at crime when she saw only revenge left to her in the dreary future.

His mocking answer; his careless contempt; the wave of the white-ringed hand; the half-veiled weariness; how clearly all this returned to her now Lionel was perchance dying.

"I must get the grapes," said Aphra, slowly. "Many's the time I've gathered them from orchard garden walls, and why not now?"

She forgot that London was a city, to be guarded from theft by an organised body of highly respectable officials—the police—who could not understand romantic attachment under any affecting incidents, if they led to thieves practices. It is difficult to make a policeman see extenuating circumstances when he catches a thief red-handed, so to speak, in plunder.

"Perhaps some kind person might give me some grapes if I told them I wanted them for a dying child," thought Aphra, resolved to test human benevolence under abnormal conditions. "They may perchance have a son themselves, whom they love as I love Lionel."

The poor creature, therefore, under a benighted impulse, addressed herself to an elderly female, clad in a neat morning dress, a black shawl, and a pale grey bonnet, whom she saw leave a large greengrocer's shop, on the counter of which rested splendid bunches of the tempting and delicious grapes, with the bloom on them soft as the down on a butterfly's wing; baskets, too, of lovely flowers, such as Lionel craved, were in the window.

"Well, woman," said the elderly female, removing her net veil, "what is your business with me? I'm just off to a mothers' meeting, and am about to address a grateful and intelligent audience from the platform."

"I have a son," said Aphra, in her deep voice, "sick unto death; for pity's sake I pray you give me a few grapes to quench his thirst."

She looked so handsome and so wild, so uncivilised and so tortured—tortured dumbly, like an animal that does not moan. Only a poet or a saint would have understood what this mute pain meant.

Alone in London, amid the glare and fluster of the lighted shops, praying for grapes to save a sick man's life and forgetting the only possible charity she could expect would be perhaps half a loaf and out-door relief in a few days from the union.

Miss Hooker, who liked clean, dowdy, courtesy-dropping, ordinary-looking people, and fancied Aphra's superb dark beauty had evil strength, regarded her suspiciously.

The agonies of this soul—gloomy, despondent, Greek—in its conflicting passions of fear, doubt, hatred and adoration, could have nothing in common with the cut-and-dried sentiment of a respectable Miss Hooker, whose uncle, a missionary, had been eaten by savages amid the wild islands of the South; besides she was about to address a mothers' meeting, the curate of St. Ethelberta's would hold her up as a model to her sex, and who could surpass Miss Hooker in her judgment of fine calicoes, flannels, towelling and linen goods?

"I'm not in the habit of speaking to people in the street. If you will give me your address, and I find you a perfectly deserving and honest woman, I will call upon you, and read a little to you and your son; take a track."

Aphra took the tract and tore it in half, with a fierce laugh.

"I am a gipsy," she said, glaring at Miss Hooker till she dropped her basket and umbrella, looking like a mild goat alarmed by its first vision of the Anaconda snake. "My home is on the mountains."

"Oh, dear! I thought you were something strange. Never been christened or learnt your catechism. I should be afraid. Poor pagan, I pity you," said Miss Hooker, picking her way over the road like a chicken afraid of wetting its feet. "Why an American-Indian, all scalps and tomahawks, couldn't be much worse. No religion and no principles to guide her. Dear! dear! how shocking!"

Aphra went on her way. She would make another and last appeal, this time to a man, before acting desperately. The artists had always treated her kindly and generously. Men, she believed, had more pity for women than women had. It had been her misfortune to love a stony-hearted baronet; the rest were most probably humane and pitiful.

She meant to steal the grapes sooner than return without them. She now perceived a fashionably-dressed man, about forty years of age, approaching. He was a jeweller; wealthy, common and cold, waiting for the arrival of one of his shop-hands, whom he had taken a fancy to, and whose subsequent disappointment in her master's loyalty was so severe, she drowned herself in a garden well at the end of her grandfather's farm.

Aphra was no longer youthful enough to catch the admiring gaze of stranger's eyes, but she made a grand picture in the demi jour; that inner tragic life of hers had given sombre mournfulness to her features, and there was still reckless eagerness about the scowling brows. He was lighting a cigar, as she said:

"Sir, you will never regret it, but I pray you help a fellow-creature in want."

The man threw away his fuse with a laugh.

"Let me tell you, my dear, you're too old for begging advantageously. You forgot to make hay when the sun shone. I never give money away in the streets, but I don't mind treating you to a glass of ale," touching her shoulder.

Aphra showed him her dagger, as she said: "I am glad I am not a Christian." He stared at her in amazement, and passed on to meet Catherine, leaving Aphra standing on the kerb-stone.

The glaring light of a butcher's shop shone full on her face, dark with suffering. The butcher was a humane being, in spite of his trade, for he said:

"I'm sorry you're in trouble, missus. Would you like one of those bits of meat on the

chopping-board? 'cos I don't mind giving it to yer; you've got hunger written on yer face."

Aphra clasped her hands. "Ah! no, give me money, sir, to save his life—to save my darling's life. I want to buy him some grapes."

The butcher threw her sixpence, and it fell by accident among some sawdust. An old clothes' man, who had entered the shop to buy some sheep's liver, darted after the coin, and before Aphra could say a word, rushed past her round the corner. She followed, but soon he was lost in a crowd.

They had stolen her sixpence, she would steal the grapes. If this was not justice it seemed something like it to her ignorant reasoning. But theft is extremely difficult to carry out successfully—not the moral theft which leaves human beings more bankrupt in heart and happiness than any loss of gold, although no law can punish it—and Aphra knew the consequences: a prison, handcuffs, hard fare, separation from Lionel, and yet she resolved to run the risk. She had always laughed at and evaded the law.

She passed by the greengrocer's shop twice before finding it empty; the third time she entered, seized a large bunch of grapes, and hid them under her cloak, her heart beating wildly. She was on the doorstep about to fly, when a small boy called out to the greengrocer's wife who re-appeared:

"I say, missus, this 'ere gipsy's been a griggin' your fruit; she's got a fine bunch o' grapes under her cloak."

"Seize her," cried the greengrocer, who now, assisted by the pork-butcher, rushed at Aphra.

"I'll have no thieves on my premises without givin' 'em up to justice. Stay, boy, fetch a policeman, she's very desperate."

For Aphra now fought wildly like a creature at bay. She stabbed the greengrocer in the arm, and he howled so piteously, his wife rushed over the road to secure a doctor's services. An enormous crowd soon collected around the shop. But Aphra found herself no longer collared, hustled and derided; blood trickled down her face and arms, and her temples were bruised with various blows, but she was alone in the centre of a circle. They feared her savage thrusts.

"Here's the police!" cried the delighted gamins, as four policemen arrived and pushed the crowd aside.

"Oh! mercy!" cried Miss Hooker, who had taken a wrong turning and now re-crossed the street where she had first seen Aphra; "what a narrow and providential escape I've had to be sure; she might have murdered me!"

"She's pretty near settled poor Hodges," cried several voices; "he's fainted away in the back parlour, and she's bit Mr. Griskin's right hand dreadful!"

Aphra, sick, and delirious, faint from loss of blood, staggered onward a few steps, and then, throwing aside her dagger, remained motionless, her head on her breast, as if the swift, advancing flames of a furnace were around her, but they heard her mutter between her teeth:

"To save his life!"

"Yes, you can talk to yourself in prison, you vagrant," cried a policeman, shaking her roughly by the shoulder. "You're a gipsy bred and born, that anyone can see; you're like an eagle that longs to soar over wider lands and seas than ours, but a stray shot will some day bring you down."

"It has long since," said Aphra, shuddering, more from the inward probing of an old wound than from physical pain.

"I shouldn't wonder you'll get a lifer if Hodges dies, or they'll hang you as a warnin' to the rest of your friends."

But she, barely conscious of aught, only muttered wearily:

"To save his life!"

Lady Violet and the Earl of Harrington were sitting together in their luxurious drawing-room after dinner, discussing the letter they had received from Dr. Moseley.

It was a beautiful room—a room that might have been a fit reception for a queen. Water-colour drawings by the famous artists Thorneburn, Hayes and Caffieri adorned the walls. The curtains were of pale blue velvet, with silver satin borders, and the gold-backed chairs were of pale blue satin, embroidered with costly flowers; rare exotic plants and orchids of waxen splendour issued from gilt and ebony vases; the carpet's pattern was formed of dead gold leaves, mingled with blue forget-me-nots and wild roses; beneath the handsome mirrors boxes of rare ferns were reflected with almost magic splendour, and the ornaments on the console table were of that simple but costly work only a connoisseur could thoroughly do justice to. In this palatial room Lady Violet, looking herself like a fine picture, was sitting with her back to the light, one arm resting on the carving of the grand piano, as if in doubt whether or no to try over some of the new music sent her from the library.

She had no disinterested anxiety in the fate of her sister; with Meredith as her accomplice, together had they dashed the cup of happiness from Lady Constance's lips, and now to hear that she was ill, perhaps dying, seemed in truth almost a relief. Death closed any unwelcome inquiries from other's tongues.

The earl was more moved than his daughter; something in the very sweetness of his younger child's nature had wound itself round his heart in spite of pride, obstinacy and anger. Hearing of her dangerous state, he was almost inclined to withdraw her from Doctor Moseley's establishment and watch over her himself. He had no wish to murder his child, whatever her sin towards him, and in truth his treatment of her had been harsh indeed.

They had just dined, and Lady Violet, now leaning back in her chair, was reading over Dr. Moseley's letter as if she had no pity for her sister, who so surely needed help and comfort. Her dress was still as exquisitely studied as ever.

She wore a lemon-coloured brocaded silk; it was square cut at the throat, and showed to advantage the delicately-moulded neck, round which she wore a magnificent necklace of pearls and rubies; it was one of her most charming toilettes, and was not Sir Hugh Allerton expected at the Hall? And did she not intend to finally complete her conquest of him tonight?

The earl's eyes wandered over the princely extent of park, timber and lake, as if the consideration of property was calling out a certain mental machinery which crushed emotion. Did he miss Lady Constance? Was there something in the soft chords of a voice breathing a musical rhythm recalling his lost wife's tones? When anger is exhausted and injury done, remorse often awakes old love's memories.

He would have given a good deal to have seen his younger daughter glide as of old across the lawn in her timid, graceful way. She who hitherto like the hapless Maud, had

But lain in the lilies and slept in the roses of life.

A dreadful doubt oppressed the earl that Lady Constance was being slowly destroyed, and if so was he not her murderer? The atmosphere of the magnificent room, contact with Lady Violet's superb self, could not stifle a conscience-whisper. Here before him was Moseley's letter, his demand for one thousand pounds, and the statement that Lady Constance was nearly dying.

Without being a loving father, he was to all intents and purposes a just man. He did not wish her to pay the forfeit of her sin with her life. The fibres of his soul, so long hardened by pride, thrilled and expanded anew under pity's spell.

"Violet," he said, watching her earnestly, "this is terrible news about your sister. Do you know I fear Moseley is pushing matters too far?"

Lady Violet looked at the flaming coal, the light from which threw marvellous shades around her lemon-coloured silk, and slightly shivered.

"Do you think, papa, she will die?"

The earl threw Moseley's letter down as if it were tainted with some unpleasant odour, and drew aside one of the blue satin curtains which had just been closed. Not a leaf rustled on the lawn; the moon shone on the branching trees of the avenue, and some of their shadows quivered on the ivy-covered wall.

Had the bright spirit of his home departed for ever into the shades of desolation? Old age, in itself a grief, had come to him; he, who had no mercy on youth. These spectral shadows brought back an image of his wretched child. She had never been clever enough to interest him, and yet why did he feel it would be heaven to have her little hand resting again in his—to feel her sympathy sweep through the darkness of his moods?

"I believe, unless we restore her to her husband, Lionel Hargrave, she will remain a hopeless lunatic, or else die of sorrow."

Lady Violet started to her feet.

"You promised me," she said, the flush on her face mounting to crimson, "that you would never acknowledge a landscape gardener as your son-in-law. Think of his birth, some baseborn foundling, with no education or ideas. Picture his first introduction to our set; his awful ignorance. Why, he'd cut his lip with his table-knife at dinner very likely, and dust his boots with a red bandana pocket-handkerchief."

"Don't speak so violently, my dear. The proof that I have studied your interest, and too much, perhaps, is that I have banished your sister, but we may carry rigour too far. I dare not kill my child."

Lady Violet re-seated herself. She was a woman for emergencies. She distrusted the result of this new affection that might undo all her plans.

"Will you listen to me, papa?" she said, looking pre-occupied, "because I have a scheme by which we may save her life, and also ourselves a great many complications and worries. The great end we have in view is to get rid of our bête noire, the landscape gardener, is it not?"

"Precisely. I never thought he would refuse a bribe; the fellow's got some rough and ready notions of honesty, I do believe."

"All we must scheme for is to get this Lionel Hargrave out of England at any cost, and the only way to do this is to prove to him that Constance is dead."

"Impossible, my dear child. It is very probable she may die, all things considered, and the thought is extremely painful to me. But to make her feign death is out of the question."

"But it must be so, papa. We will convince him she is dead. We must show her to him in her coffin!"

"What?—here? Mind, I've no wish to figure as a hero in a leading article of any fashionable paper as the wicked earl. Take care what you are doing, my Violet."

"No, not here, but at Moseley's. Already Hargrave believes her seriously ill, and Moseley will communicate his fears to him. What more natural than to hear of her death? We will appear benevolent and reasonable, and permit him to take his farewell of her in her coffin for the last time. We will be of course present; he will then—I have it from the gipsy's own lips—leave England for ever."

The earl looked at his elder daughter with something of the same interest with which Napoleon I. may have inspected his generals on the eve of battle.

"You, my dear, would not have made the fatal mistake of returning home if you had married a landscape gardener, but more probably have sailed from Liverpool with him in some cargo boat."

"Don't suggest absurd things, papa, as if I should ever think of wedding a Lionel Hargrave. Disgusting!"

"It seems he turned your grand lady's-maid's head, Sophia Meredith, and she wasn't a very creditable member of our establishment, if all were true we heard."

"But she was useful. Her dresses secured one success; as for her hats, one must have forgiven that woman every sin in the Newgate Calendar if one only saw her exquisite millinery."

You remember, that dress I was painted in for my picture that was so admired in the Royal Academy was all Meredith's design and workmanship?"

"Bah! She was more fit for a stage than a servants' hall, and it really does seem strange that because a man has a face that a sculptor might have found acceptable, he is followed here by an avenging demon in the form of a lady's-maid, and after all positively marries an earl's daughter."

"But first to smooth away all difficulties, remember Constance is now insane, but the attack will not last long. Moseley doubts its continuance. He is a most prudent being, he has no desire to be complicated in anything unpleasant; scandal is so ruinous to any professional man. During her most violent paroxysms she must be chloroformed and then placed in her coffin, or if she should lay in a trance as she once did, nothing will be easier than to convince Hargrave of her decease. The room will be hung in black, Moseley will testify to her death, and Hargrave, paralysed with grief, will leave England, while Constance, on her recovery, can be removed here, and receive every care and kindness."

"The idea is ingenious, and it does you credit," said the earl; "but what after?"

"After—when she is here we can easily convince her Lionel Hargrave (true to his venal instincts) has accepted our bribe and departed. We can resume our normal life under the same circumstances, and all will be well. Moseley can be brought to do anything at a price, but the sooner the matter is carried out the better for all concerned. Sir Hugh Allerton's suspicions else may be aroused."

"And how if the landscape gardener returns unexpectedly to England and sees his supposed dead wife?"

"I will baffle him even then, people alter so much with years. I could feign to be Constance, but I do not think we need anticipate his return till we have got rid of him. He might die out in Australia."

The earl paced up and down his drawing-room in deep thought, and presently the sound of wheels caught his ear, and a carriage and pair dashed at full speed up to the hall door.

Lady Violet smiled; she had some notion of who the visitor might be.

"If this should be Sir Hugh Allerton, Violet, and I rather think from the hurried rate at which his thoroughbreds are driven, it is the baronet, I must warn you I heard something of his affairs which will rather stagger you; it is, I know, one of the duties of hospitality to entertain our guests well, but I hope you are not building too much on the hopes of a wealthy marriage; although he is the sole heir to the Allerton estates, his affairs are terribly involved."

And even while he spoke, the real heir, Sir Lionel Allerton, was lying in a smoke-stained room in a miserable London street, denied the common necessities of life, suffering bitter, abject want, exposed to the tender mercies of a harridan. Lady Violet trembled slightly as she said angrily:

"I suppose Sir Hugh is a gambler like his father. Meredith knew all about Sir Phoenix's weaknesses."

"Oh, no, my dear; Sir Hugh has the misfortune to be almost rabidly honest, if I may use such a term, and speaking of Meredith, where has that Sphinx vanished?"

"To America, papa, till all those malicious scandals have blown over; the only ridiculous part of her career was her overwrought adoration of Hargrave. She raved over his aristocratic bearing, his musical genius, his daring courage. Isn't it quite too absurd to listen to? But when women love, some capricious sprite blinds their eyes, and they stumble to their doom in darkness."

"Listen, Violet, I hear Sir Hugh Allerton's voice; what does he want calling after dinner, I wonder? Well, I'll pass through the conser-

vatory and leave you to entertain the misguided baronet, while I smoke my cigar in the library, and write to Moseley."

(To be Continued.)

A WITTY TORY.

THE Rev. Dr. Mather Byles, a Tory clergyman of America, was greatly disliked by the patriotic citizens of his town. His bitter wit provoked their enmity quite as much as his leaning towards England, and the Board of War sentenced him, in 1777, to be confined to his own house. A sentinel was placed over him, whom one day the doctor persuaded to go on an errand for him, promising to take his place until his return. The passers-by were much amused to see the doctor gravely marching with a musket on his shoulder, up and down before his own door, faithfully keeping guard over himself.

A short time after, the guard was removed, but the doctor provoking a further complaint, a soldier was again stationed before his house. In a few days he was also removed, and the witty Tory was left unnoticed. "I have," he said, in speaking of these events, "been guarded, regarded, and disregarded."

His wit once met with a severe retort. Encountering a lady who, having declined an offer of marriage from the doctor, had married a gentleman of the name of Quincy, he said, "So, madame, it appears you prefer a Quincy to Byles."

"Yes," she replied; "for if there had been anything worse than biles, God would have afflicted Job with them."

THE

BARONESS OF THE ISLES.

CHAPTER XIV.

IVAR, Baltred and Baltred's sons gathered at the side of the vessel and watched the approaching blockaders in an increasing dismay and anxiety.

Had they been seen? The question was readily answered in the affirmative. The king's ships were making for the fishing-craft, unmistakably, with intent to overhaul her. What was to be done? Should the fugitives return to the shore? Or should they put a bold face upon the matter and endeavour to outwit the enemy?

Baltred and Ivar were in favour of the latter course.

"We will conduct ourselves as if we had nothing to fear or conceal," said Baltred, wisely. "We must pursue our avocations, of course. They will not attempt to prevent fishers from plying their craft. I do not believe they will search our vessel, if they should overhaul us. But we must be prepared for a search. There's an extra frock of mine yonder, sir knight, and a hat. You will do well to put them on."

Ivar hastily drew on over his garments the long, coarse frock of Baltred, which was stained and badly worn, and which effectually disguised his tall, noble, upright figure, and gave him an appearance of greater bulk.

He dishevelled his hair, drawing it down over his forehead, and crowned it with Baltred's old hat.

"Your best friend wouldn't recognise you now," said Baltred, complacently. "As to the Lady Matilda and her woman, they cannot be disguised. The presence of a woman on a fishing vessel is singular, and would excite suspicion, however she might be dressed. They must keep below. They might hide in the hold. There's an empty water cask there, I remember," he added, suddenly. "Let them hide in that."

Ivar and one of Baltred's sons went below. In the course of a very few minutes the maiden and her attendant were safely hidden in the empty water-cask in the hold, and the men returned to the deck.

By this time the fishing-vessel was moving swiftly in the open sea. The projecting arms of the cove were already quite a little distance in the rear. The tall bluffs were receding rapidly. The two ships of the king's fleet were drawing nearer the fugitives, like vultures flocking to the prey.

Every stitch of sail upon the fishing-vessel was thrown to the breeze. The craft skimmed over the white caps like a living creature in full flight.

The men stood to their work in silence. Ivar took his place with the others, only more keen and watchful and anxious than they. Life and liberty to him and his betrothed depended upon their escape. He worked with a calm energy that betrayed little of the anxiety within him.

How the pursuers came on! How they gained upon the fugitive!

"Baltred," said Ivar, "we begin to look like fugitives. They will suspect us."

Just then a shout came from the nearest ship.

"Boat ahoy! What craft is that?"

"The 'Jolly Flounder,'" answered Baltred, in a deep, hoarse voice. "Who are you?"

"His majesty's ship 'Shark,'" was the answer. "Where are you bound?"

"On a fishing excursion," answered Baltred, truthfully enough, for he intended to combine profit with his other project.

"Lie to!" commanded the ship's captain. "We'll come alongside."

Baltred hesitated, but did not slacken the speed of his craft.

"You see, sir knight," he explained, "the 'Jolly Flounder' has a neat pair of heels, and I'm not sure but she'd make the best in a race with yonder ships. If the night were only dark now? I think we'd better run for it!"

His companions seemed to share his opinion, for the "Jolly Flounder" shot forward with even increased speed.

The ships under full sail came in swift pursuit.

"A stern chase is a long chase," is a well-known modern nautical maxim. It was as true in those early days as now.

The "Jolly Flounder" took the lead and the enemy came after, gaining steadily, yet not overtaking her.

"Oh, for darkness!" sighed Baltred. "We cannot put back if we would. We can only push forward and trust to Providence and the darkness that comes before the morning."

But it soon became evident that the flight could not be prolonged to the desired hour. The pursuers continued to gain upon the fugitive. And now the swifter of the two ships pulled forward at a rate that was alarming.

"We shall have to lie to," said Baltred, a cold sweat breaking out upon his forehead. "We must make the best of the situation. We may escape, after all. Be cool, boys. Easy! Steady there! So!"

The "Jolly Flounder" was soon hove to, and now the pursuers came up with swift bounds. The "Shark" was presently alongside.

"Who are you?" asked the captain of the king's vessel. "And why did you run before us?"

"My name is Baltred," said the old fisher, "and these youths"—and he gave a comprehensive nod towards his companions—"are my sons. We are fishers. We gave you a run because we are as full of pleasantries as yourself. The 'Jolly Flounder' is a tidy little craft, if I do say it—"

The captain of the "Shark" leaped on board the fishing vessel and approached Baltred's sons, surveying them closely and keenly. Then he came near our hero, and stared full into his countenance. But Ivar was cool and calm as became a knight of his proved courage. He made his visage vacant of expression; he

seemed a very clown, and the captain turned away, exclaiming:

"Is there anyone below?"
"Look for yourself, sir," answered Baltred.
"You'll find the cabin empty."

The captain and several of his men went into the little cabin, but soon returned, unsuccessful in their search.

"We'll look at the hold, boys," said the captain. "I'm not quite satisfied. And the reward for the capture of the lady and knight ought to make us keen as razors. We'll overturn the ballast—we'll peer into boxes and barrels—"

The rest of the sentence was lost as the captain and certain of his men descended into the hold with lighted lanterns.

Ivar's heart seemed to stand still in his frightful suspense.

The minutes dragged like ages.

Then came a great shout from below, pierced by women's shrieks.

Ivar snatched up a spike and dashed to the companion-way, his very soul in a blaze of fury.

The captain, exulting and triumphant, came up from below with the Lady Matilda, who, white and frightened, was struggling in his grasp.

"Unhand the lady!" cried Ivar, in a voice that rang like a trumpet. "Take your hands off her, hound!"

He emphasised the command with a blow upon the captain's arm that compelled him to loose his hold of his prey.

Like an arrow shot from the bow, the Lady Matilda flew to her lover.

He folded one arm around her and stood at bay, his eyes blazing, his face grand and terrible in its passionate defiance.

None dared approach him for the moment.

The captain of the "Shark," disabled, was for a brief space stupefied at this strange aspect of affairs.

But, recovering herself, as the consort of his ship came up, and fifty stout seamen were thus gathered under his command, he said:

"Sir knight, I recognise your valour. Resistance cannot avail you. Note our numbers. Yet, as I respect bravery, even in an enemy, and as the stories of your prowess are familiar to my ears, I promise you that if you will surrender yourself quietly, we will respect your person and that of this noble lady, and that we will convey you both unharmed by us to the very presence of the king."

Ivar looked around him. The two ships overshadowed the little "Flounder." Fifty stout seamen, all armed, were clustered around, all ready to obey the senior captain's command. To resist would be worse than madness.

"I yield, sir Captain," he said, courteously, removing his hat, "since I can do nought else. I claim your promise to respect this noble lady."

"We have our orders, sir, from the king himself. Reginald will marry the daughter of Godred, and we behold in the Lady Matilda our future queen," declared the captain, politely. "We will now go on board my ship."

"One word," said Ivar. "These kindly fishers—what of them?"

"They have disobeyed the king—they have befriended a proscribed traitor and exile. They must go with us!" said the captain.

"Nay, not so!" cried Matilda. "They are good friends of mine. Dare not to touch them, whatever the king's proclamation, for Reginald would rather far you let them go at my desire than carry them captive to his presence when I ask for their freedom. Let them go, and I myself will bear all the burden of the blame. Let them go. If the king desires to take them captive afterward, he can send for them!"

These various considerations, urged by the lady whom the captain regarded as his future queen, were considered by him as of great weight. He reflected briefly, and then gravely announced that Baldred and his sons were free to depart whither they would.

The prisoners were then marched on board the "Shark."

The king's vessel soon slowly drifted away

from the little "Flounder," which headed about for home after a very melancholy fashion.

Ivar had thrown off his disguise. Now, with the Lady Matilda, he was shown into the cabin of the "Shark" by the captain, who, in his triumph, and in view of prospective reward from his royal master, was exceedingly courteous to his unfortunate captives.

"The king is still at Castle Grand," he said. "We shall sail for your castle, Lady Matilda. With this wind we shall arrive there in an hour."

He bowed and withdrew, stationing a guard at the door. Ivar and Matilda looked at each other in dead silence, and their hearts sank. In an hour they would be in the king's presence! In an hour, Ivar would receive his sentence! In an hour, he would probably be dead!

CHAPTER XV.

ONLY an hour between the lovers and their doom! Only an hour before the Lady Matilda should be a helpless captive in the hands of her unscrupulous admirer the king. Only an hour before the knight Ivar should yield his life to the executioner at the command of the royal tyrant!

Only an hour!

The ship had left the "Jolly Flounder" behind, and was now bowling away upon its course towards Castle Grand. With every bound of the speeding vessel that hour lessened into minutes, and drew the unhappy lovers nearer to their fate.

They sat near together in the cabin of the royal ship, grave and silent, but not despairing. The old nurse Mary covered her face with her hands and moaned and wept, but Matilda's lofty courage had not deserted her.

The maiden comprehended the awful peril in which Ivar stood, but she was not one to give way to tears and lamentations.

The daughter of Godred had been cast in an heroic mould.

"Is there no way of escape, Ivar?" she asked, in a whisper, after a brief silence.

"None," answered Ivar, calmly. "The guards are watchful. We could not secure and lower a boat. To leap overboard and endeavour to swim ashore would be madness, even if we could do so. Some way of escape may open to us after we land. We can only wait."

The vessel headed boldly for the sea, certain tall bluffs and far-lying points of land intervening between them and Castle Grand rendering such course necessary.

For half an hour the ship's motion was even and steady; but suddenly the vessel gave a wild bound, and plunged forward like a frightened animal in full flight.

"Something has happened," said Matilda.

"What can it be?"

Something had happened—something strange, sinister and terrible.

After capturing Matilda and Ivar the commanders of the two royal vessels had consulted together, and had concluded to separate, the "Shark" bearing its prey to the king, and its consort going in an opposite direction along the coast to warn the remainder of the fleet in that section that the fugitives were captured and in safe custody.

Thus the "Shark" was left to pursue her course alone to Castle Grand.

Her consort had vanished behind a high point of land.

Baltred's boat had gained the shore. The few vessels that had been recently seen upon the adjacent waters had disappeared, when a vessel much larger than the "Shark" came suddenly into view from a northerly direction, and bore swiftly down upon the royal craft.

The commander of the "Shark" believed the stranger to belong to the king's fleet.

He accordingly slackened his speed, allowing the other to draw near.

The strange ship approached with a sweeping motion, nearly resembling that of a vulture in search of prey

The captain of the "Shark" displayed the flag of Man.

The stranger made no response, but continued to advance swiftly.

She had approached within a few rods of the "Shark," her course directly across the bows of the latter vessel, when she suddenly floated a flag from her peak—the flag of Norway!

It was light enough for those on the deck of the "Shark" to make out the emblems of that hated flag.

It was then that the Manx vessel gave that wild plunge and bound that had so startled the lovers.

Those were troublous times for the British Isles.

The Norsemen, pirates and freebooters by profession, haunted these waters, plying their trade in more or less security.

Now they levied mail upon the people of Scotland, occasionally stealing a prince or chief for ransom.

Now they ravaged the Irish coasts, and again they desolated the little realm of Man, carrying away men and treasure.

Bold, audacious, and terrible, they were a terror to the British islanders, whom again and again they conquered and held in slavish subjection for greater or lesser periods.

The sight of the Norwegian flag, therefore, as may be supposed, struck terror to the hearts of the Manxmen on board the "Shark."

The freebooter's ship was the superior of any vessel in the Manx fleet in respect to size, fleetness, and formidable appearance. Her decks bristled with men.

As we have said, her course crossed that of the "Shark," and the latter vessel, after a few wild bounds, was obliged to slacken speed and to alter her course.

While the latter movement was being effected the freebooters swooped nearer and nearer upon her intended prey.

Her course was altered also, and as the royal vessel again sped forward she flew after her in swift pursuit, and in the course of a few minutes more was again in the very path of the Manxman.

Then came the command of the Norwegian for surrender.

"By our lady," muttered the captain of the "Shark," "he has got us. We must surrender. We might escape his hands by dashing our vessel on yonder rocks, but it will be safest to surrender. Do you not think so?" he added, addressing his chief officer.

The officer did think so, and the Manx captain ordered his flag to be lowered in token of his submission.

The Norwegian came alongside and boarded her captive. The Norsemen swarmed upon the deck of the "Shark," and their leader, with several followers at his back, descended to the cabin in which the lovers were confined.

The guard at the door fled at their approach, and they entered the cabin.

Matilda and Ivar, with the old nurse, stood up and received them in silence, comprehending all that had occurred. The appearance of the Norwegians had not overwhelmed them with astonishment.

For some days rumours had been prevalent along the coast that Northern pirates were again cruising in British waters, and the Lady Matilda had armed her household afresh with particular reference to a possible attack from these marauders.

Instead of being overwhelmed and dismayed they were rather pleased than otherwise at the turn affairs had taken. Better to be captives of the Norsemen than to suffer death and worse than death at the hands of Reginald.

The captain of the freebooters was a very Hercules—big and brawny, with massive limbs and a great head covered with a thatch of bright red hair. He had been originally fair, but was now bronzed and sunburned. He looked a man of fierce passions, of fiery and ungovernable temper, a man who was swayed by his own caprices and governed by his own headstrong, unreasoning will.

His light blue eyes glowed with sudden fire

as his gaze rested upon the captive maiden, whose dress and bearing declared her noble, and whose radiant beauty seemed to him to surpass that of all the women he had ever seen.

"You are my captives!" he said, with scant ceremony or courtesy. "I am Balder the Norwegian. Who are you?"

"I am the knight Ivar," replied our hero, coolly, placing himself nearer Matilda, and in an attitude of defence. "This lady is Matilda, daughter of the late knight Godred. We were captives to him who is now your prisoner."

"The daughter of Godred? The fame of your father, lady, has reached my ears long ago. Godred was a brave warrior and a valiant—an honourable foe," said the Norwegian.

"As to the knight Ivar, I have heard of him also—that he is brave in the tournament and fearless in battle. So you were prisoners, eh?"

"The captain of the 'Shark' was about to convey us to the king," said Ivar. "I am under sentence of death, having been banished by Reginald."

"And the lady?"

"The king would make her his wife," said Ivar, briefly, "and she likes not him nor the honour he would confer upon her."

Balder surveyed the young pair for some moments with keen, comprehensive scrutiny.

"You two are lovers, then?" he said, at last.

The maiden blushed. Ivar bowed a grave assent.

"I see," said Balder. "Follow me, both of you. You are no longer Reginald's subjects, but mine. Come!"

The three prisoners followed him to the deck and thence to his own vessel. He conducted them to his cabin, placed a guard over them, and returned to his work.

The *Manx* vessel was new and well-built. The Norwegian found in her hold a goodly store of arms and provisions. With the decision of men of his class, he lost no time in debates or reflection. He ordered the "Shark's" boats to be lowered and her crew to be set adrift.

The captain he sent below as a prisoner. Then manning his prize with two score of his most trustworthy followers, he placed his second officer in command over them, and appointed a rendezvous at which the "Shark" was to be brought to meet his own vessel.

Then the freebooter set sail and departed for the northward, whence she had come.

The affair of the capture of the "Shark" from the moment when the latter ship had sighted her enemy until the two vessels sailed away under Norwegian command, had not occupied an hour.

There had been no battle, no tumult. The "Shark's" consort had not been attracted to the scene, the bluffs of the nearest promontory shutting her out of view. No other royal vessels were within five miles. The fishing craft had betaken themselves to a convenient distance. The freebooter had carried matters with a high hand, after his own pleasure, and there was no one to contest with him his prize, and no one to hinder his departure.

Balder remained on the deck of his vessel until the Isle of Man began to fade in the distance. The stars shone with calm, pale light upon the rippling sea. The breeze blew fresh and favourable.

The viking's red visage glowed with triumph. His bold venture of the night had gained him a ship, arms, provisions, and a captive whose beauty thrilled his soul with a great longing to woo and win her.

"A good speculation, this night's work," he said to himself, exultantly.

He descended to the cabin. It was lighted by a single lantern hung from the ceiling by a rude chain. Matilda and Ivar sat in close conversation, while the old nurse, grim and sorrowful, crouched in a corner near to them.

As Balder appeared, the lovers arose and approached him.

Ivar, in a manly, straightforward way, then told the story of his love for Matilda, the cause of Reginald's opposition to their marriage, and

the events that had followed his sentence of banishment.

He concluded, by appealing to the generosity and goodness of the Norwegian, urging that he and Matilda should be put ashore on the English, Irish, or Scottish coast, at Balder's earliest convenience.

The freebooter heard him in silence, his gaze fixed in admiration upon the maiden. When our hero had finished, Balder replied:

"You have not been treated well by Reginald, if your story is true, sir knight. Yet a man in love may be excused for many things. Reginald hath an eye for beauty. The maiden is very fair to look upon."

"We will pay you ransom," said Matilda, anxiously.

"Hath Ivar much money?"

"I have none," answered the young knight, quietly. "Had I been rich and noble born, Reginald had not dared to treat me as he has done."

"Not rich?" soliloquised the Norwegian. "Not nobly born? Then you cannot pay ransom?"

"I can pay for both!" said Matilda.

"Let me sleep upon the matter," said Balder, eying her ardently. "You shall both know my decision in the morning. The hour is late. You should be in bed, fair lady. I will show you to your couch."

He opened the door of a little room opening off the cabin. A lighted lantern hung in it, the steward, by the captain's orders, having recently prepared it for occupancy. It contained two bunks, both neatly made up, with clean linen and warm blankets.

The old nurse entered the little room, and Matilda, after a whispered good-night to her lover, followed her. The door closed behind them.

"Now let me show you to your berth, sir knight," said Balder, turning to our hero. "This way."

He conducted Ivar to a little room opening off the farther end of the cabin, and abruptly left him.

With the determination to renew his appeal to Balder in the morning, and with more of hopefulness in his heart than he had felt since his capture by the "Shark," Ivar closed his door and retired to bed.

The Norwegian appointed guards and placed them before the doors of each of the lovers. Then he ascended to the deck, muttering:

"I fancy I shall rival Ivar and King Reginald in their suit for this lady's hand. I have the advantage in that she is in my possession. And it shall go hard with me but that, so possessing her, I shall make her my very own. I shall cheat thee of thy bride, Reginald!" and he laughed to himself. "As for Ivar, whom she favours, I will rid her and me of him on the morrow."

(To be Continued.)

HOW TO GET PURE TEAS.

A DELEGATION of Baltimore tea merchants lately had an interview with the Chinese embassy at Washington, chiefly with reference to the introduction of pure teas from China, to supplant in American markets those which are coloured or adulterated. The Minister said through his interpreter that the various brands of tea sold in America and Europe are unknown to and not used by the tea consumer in China. They are especially prepared by the Chinese tea exporters for the foreign market. They are coloured by the use of chemicals; and the process, together with the peculiar methods of fixing up tea for foreign markets, not only renders the plant less palatable and beneficial, but more expensive.

The adulteration and colouring of teas for the foreign market, he said, are wholly in consequence of the demand which existed for such teas; and the Minister expressed the opinion that if Boards of Trade in New York and China

would make known the fact that pure teas are not only better but cheaper, it would benefit both producer and consumer. There is, he said, really only one kind of tea plant, and from this both the green and black teas are produced.

The equivalents for the two terms "green" and "black" do not signify to the Chinese the colour of the tea, as in America, but have reference to the period of gathering, "green" indicating to them, as in "green corn," not a colour, but a state of immaturity.

Yung Wing, who has travelled largely in the tea districts of China, said, in answer to an inquiry, that he saw no reason, except the want of Chinese labour, why tea could not be profitably grown in America, but that it is wholly a question of labour. Chinamen are employed even in Japan to superintend the work of culture and preparation, and would be a necessary part of the same work here.

Expert Chinamen would, however, not go to America as long as the present outcry against them is maintained on the Pacific coast.

AFRAID OF BEING KISSED.

A MAN WAS walking along one road, and a woman along another. The roads finally united, and the man and woman, reaching the junction at the same time, walked on from there together.

The man was carrying a large iron kettle on his back; in one hand he held by the legs a live chicken, in the other a cane; and he was leading a goat. Just as they were coming to a deep, dark ravine, the woman said to the man:

"I am afraid to go through that ravine with you; it is a lonely place, and you might overpower me and kiss me by force."

"If you were afraid of that," said the man, "you shouldn't have walked with me at all. How can I possibly overpower you and kiss you by force when I have this great iron kettle on my back, a cane in one hand and a live chicken in the other, and am leading this goat? I might as well be tied hand and foot."

"Yes," replied the woman; "but if you should stick your cane into the ground and tie the goat to it, and turn the kettle bottom side up and put the chicken under it, then you might wickedly kiss me in spite of my resistance."

"Success to thy ingenuity, oh woman!" said the rejoicing man to himself. "I should never have thought of this expedient."

And when they came to the ravine he stuck his cane into the ground and tied the goat to it, gave the chicken to the woman, saying:

"Hold it while I cut some grass for the goat;" and then, lowering the kettle from his shoulders, imprisoned the fowl under it, and wickedly kissed the woman, as she was afraid, he would.

A DIRTY OLD SHAWL.

A LADY acquaintance lost a valuable shawl. A short time after the shawl had been missed, a little girl, evidencing ancestral poverty, without the "respectable" accompaniment, rounded to in the presence of the owner of the missing shawl, and the stolen garment was at once recognised.

"Little girl," said the lady, "where did you obtain that shawl?"

"My father bought it for me," was the ready reply.

"Said the lady, 'I will go with you to your father, and ascertain where he purchased that shawl.'"

The little one objected to this proposition. Party of the first part was unyielding in the desire to see the male parent. Every stratagem peculiar to inventive genius was vainly resorted to, when the youngster, in the desperation of her case, pulled the stolen garment from her shoulders, and throwing it at its lawful owner, said:

"Take your old dirty shawl; it's not a fashionable one, any way!"

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

THE DRAMA.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.

The portion of December which precedes Christmas is so rarely productive of theatrical novelty, that we promised last week to devote a portion of our space to a more extended notice of Mr. Albery's paraphrase of Emile Augier's "Les Fourchambault," than we were then enabled to give space for. A second visit to the Haymarket has improved our opportunity, and "The Crisis" must now be pronounced a succès d'estime.

The characters are Anglicised, and thus Fourchambault becomes Mr. Denham (Mr. Howe), a rich merchant, living in a luxuriously furnished house, and blessed with an extravagant wife, a son, Fawley Denham (Mr. Terriss), and a pretty little daughter, Blanche (Miss Lucy Buckstone). Haidee Burnside (Miss Eastlake), a young American girl, quick-witted but innocent of the world's wicked ways, warm-hearted, impulsive, is a visitor to the Denhams.

Her father, an officer in the Northern States army, is supposed to have been killed in action, and Haidee has been sent to England in charge of John Goring (Mr. Kelly), another rich merchant, and a bachelor approaching middle age. Misfortune overtakes the Denhams, and bankruptcy stares them in the face. The sunshine of their home gives place to darkness, and ruin is imminent. Young Fawley Denham, a vain, conceited, idle fellow, with no very strict notions of right and wrong, has been drifting into a flirtation with Haidee. She, innocently enough, has encouraged him, but does not really love him. Marriage does not enter into his calculations, and he insults her by proposing that their little flirtation shall go on without his family knowing anything about it. Haidee indignantly repudiates this arrangement, and begins to find out who she does love—this dishonourable trifle.

Lord William Whitehead, a very worldly-minded young nobleman, engaged to Blanche, sends a note declining her hand, on the plea that he cannot think of entering a family in which a young lady visitor to the house is currently reported to be the "mistress" of the son. Haidee, horrified at seeing how she is compromised with Fawley Denham, immediately makes up her mind to leave England. She goes to John Goring, and Mrs. Goring, his mother (Miss Louise Moodie), and tells them the piteous story. John Goring, who knows he is an illegitimate son, idolises his mother, and suddenly comprehends why she persistently entreats him to help the bankrupt Denham in his distress. She tells him it is his duty, and, in answer to his question, "That man is my father?" says "Yes."

Mrs. Goring was married to Denham in a false name. The marriage is illegal, and Denham would have married her in his own name, but refused in consequence of a report impugning her virtue. That is her story. John Goring goes to Denham, offers to put down £50,000 and become his partner. Denham gives his hand to the man who has saved him, little thinking it is his own son. He has, however, other work to do. Fawley Denham, his brother, must be made to claim Haidee for his wife before all the world. This is a bitter trial for the noble-hearted John Goring, for he passionately loves the girl himself. Fawley comes to him for advice how to get out of his trouble with Haidee. Goring tells him he must marry her. Fawley flatly refuses.

The two men come to high words, and Fawley strikes Goring across the face with his glove. Restraining himself by a violent effort, Goring seizes the young man's arm, and with the words "It is well for you you are my brother," lets him go. Fawley, ashamed and penitent, begs forgiveness of his brother, who accords it, but binds him down never to reveal their relationship. After this the comedy rapidly proceeds

to its close. Fawley Denham is refused by Haidee, who, when taxed with it, confesses she has loved John Goring from the time she first saw him. Overjoyed at hearing this he takes her to his arm, and the play is at an end.

The acting throughout was spirited, intelligent, and good. Mrs. John Wood as Miss Denham was exuberantly extravagant and selfish; Miss Eastlake, as the persecuted young lady, was bright, pathetic, and pleasing, and Mr. David Fisher, jun., amusingly affected in the part of the softened but mercenary young nobleman, Lord William Whitehead; Mr. Terriss's Fawley Denham was vigorous and emphatic. The honours of the performance must be awarded to Miss Louise Moodie and Mr. Kelly. The lady's Mrs. Goring was a study; love, resignation, piety, dignity, and pathos were blended in every tone and action, and seldom have we seen more perfect by-play as an accompaniment to honest expression. Mr. Kelly, too, as John Goring, was earnest, forceful, and acted so admirably up to the standard of his injured but forgiving parent as to win the highest approval. In short the "Crisis" in authorship, mounting, and acting is well worthy the fame for high comedy which is associated with the name of the Haymarket Theatre.

COVENT GARDEN ENGLISH OPERA.

The Royal Italian Opera, which has so recently lost its enterprising lessee, Mr. Frederick Gye, by a lamentable gun accident, has been this week rented by Mr. Samuel Hayes for a limited number of performances of "Ballad Operas," the "bright particular star" being Mr. Sims Reeves. The funeral of Mr. Gye on Monday was marked by the closing of the house on that evening as a token of respect to his memory. On the opening night (Saturday), the first and second acts of "Maritana," the leading parts in which were sustained by Madame Cave-Ashton, Maritana; Mrs. Aynsley Cook, The Marchioness; Miss Lucy Franklin, Lazarillo; Mr. Cotte, Don Cesar; Mr. George Fox, Don Jose; Mr. Fumaux Cook, The King. We need not say that these artists are at home in their respective roles. Mrs. Cave-Ashton looked well, and sang well as the heroine; and Mr. Cotte was warmly encoined in "There is a flower that bloometh;" as were also Mr. Fox's singing of "Happy moments," and Mrs. Cave-Ashton's "Scenes that are brightest." It was evident, however, that it was to hear the great tenor that the audience had gathered in such force, and all were on the tiptoe of expectation when the curtain rose on old Bundie's Cottage, and introduced Didden's sumpervirent "Jolly Young Waterman." Thereafter came "Then farewell, my trim-built wherry," and last, Incedon's and Braham's ballad, now the property of Sims Reeves, "The Bay of Biscay." How these were sung must be an abiding memory to those who heard them; as to the audience they fought loud and long to win an encore, but failed, as we heartily wish they oftener did in this exacting and much-abused custom. "Tom Tug" was well supported by Mr. Stoyle as Robin, who was encoined in "Cherries and Plums;" Mrs. Cave-Ashton being also recalled after an excellent interpretation of C. E. Horn's ballad of "Cherry Ripe." Offenbach's "Rose of Arongare," and "The Beggar's Opera," with Sims Reeves' "Captain Macheath," brought a crowded house on Tuesday.

The new drama, "A Republican Marriage," seems to have established itself on the Olympic bills. Its authorship is currently attributed to Mrs. Holford, of Park Lane.

MADAME ROSE HERSEE has left England on an operatic engagement involving an extensive tour in America. She took her farewell on Saturday as Amina in "La Sonnambula," at the Alexandra Palace.

A SKETCH, by W. F. Vandervell, called "Visions in Wonderland," will be among the Christmas novelties at the Aquarium.

The Argyll Rooms, which were finally closed, by order of the Middlesex magistrates, are

about to be opened as a restaurant; Mr. Loibl, of the London, having declined to lease them for a music hall, as has been currently reported.

A CURIOUS theatrical incident at the Strand Theatre has lately come under our notice. During the performance of "Our Club," in consequence of some misunderstanding with the management, Mr. Penley declined to perform. It seemed inevitable that an apology must be made and the part read, when the "call-boy," who had the piece by heart, volunteered his services to "go on." He did so; spoke the text with the readiness of an experienced actor, indeed with such point as on three distinct occasions to elicit applause, and is now in possession of the character every night.

A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

THE London boat was half an hour late on this particular day, owing to the tide and heavy loading.

It was the fashion that summer to drive to the dock to see the steamer come in, and on the wharf was quite a crowd of prettily-dressed and pretty women. Taken altogether, it was a picturesque and lively scene, but the two young men leaning over the guards of the boat seemed to find no particular satisfaction in regarding it.

Because the last train of the day had already left the station for the inland town to which they had intended going.

"There's nothing to be done but to stay till to-morrow, of course," Lawrence Shaw said, as they went slowly up the shady street.

And his friend John Clare said, in his happy, easy way:

"Nothing but that. It doesn't matter. I've heard of the hotel here, and know that we shall find something to eat."

Shaw was an artist. Tastes cultivated beyond his powers of execution kept him in a state of chronic disquiet with himself.

So he sighed over his ideals, was unsparing in his criticism of his own work, and finished nothing.

Dr. John Clare, whose part in our story is very short, was Shaw's friend—common, sensible, honest, earnest, and working partly from love of his profession, and partly for the money he was realising from it. They were on their way to Clare's home for a few days' visit, when they failed to make the connection with their train.

"You have given up portrait painting entirely?"

"Entirely."

"May I ask why?"

"Well, partly because I did nothing worth keeping; more because there were no women to paint."

"Oh the deuce; I've heard you say that there never was anything like the flower-like beauty of our native women."

"The flower-fadeth. Before I can get one of those apple-blossom faces on canvas it turns to angles and sallowness."

"Shall you never paint faces again?"

"Not till I can find one that has a life beyond complexion."

There was a silence. Clare broke it somewhat suddenly.

"I believe I'll make a call. I have a lady friend here whom I shall be glad to see again. Will you go, Shaw?"

He glanced down at his travelling dress.

"That's of no account. We can explain. I want you to see her."

Clare had a mischievous purpose in his heart, but he talked of everything else as they sauntered through the elm-shaded, salt-breeze cooled streets toward the house where they were going.

"Miss Phillips, you have not forgotten me—John Clare?"

"I have not forgotten Dr. Clare, certainly," putting out a gracious hand; and then presentation of Lawrence Shaw followed.



[A FAIR WOMAN.]

They remained without in the dimness. Shaw noted a good outline of head and shoulders, absolute repose of position, a low-keyed, soft-toned voice.

Miss Phillips touched the gas-burner, and the jet flared up under her fingers. Shaw stood transfixed, unable to think of anything but a glorious white lily.

She was tall, as I have said, and perfectly proportioned.

She had a pink-and-white complexion, but her hair was just the colour of a seal—gold on the top of its ripples, dead brown in its hollows. The long-lashed eyes were blue, clear and carelessly cold—dreaming eyes in spite of their brightness.

Miss Phillips glanced at him questioningly once or twice, as if to discover the cause of his silence.

She was kind to him—kinder perhaps than her wont.

Shaw felt the little effort in her attempts to draw him into the talk, and it only made him the more determinedly dumb.

In the street once more, he found his voice.

"Have I behaved like an idiot?"

"Rather. What ailed you?"

"Who is she? What is she? I never saw such a woman in my life."

"Helen Phillips. An orphan. Not very rich and not very poor; as I told you, a lady by birth and education. I met her when I was studying in Paris. I wanted to convince you that there was one beautiful woman of native birth. I hope I haven't done mischief."

"Is she so dangerous, then?"

"Men have found her so. She is as utterly unthawed by admiration as one of your divinities done in marble. I doubt if she has a heart in her make-up."

Shaw smoked silently.

As they turned the corner of the street and came out on the harbour with its rippling lights and shadows, he paused.

"I retract, I recant, and so let her go," waving off the smoke-wreaths from his cigar.

They went their way next day. Shaw made his visit, and as usual made friends of everybody.

Nobody guessed that the quiet old place bored him after the first day. And so he went back to the city, and left his friend there to his hospital practice, while he went to the rocks and fogs. He said he needed rest, though nobody could guess from what. Mrs. Wood saw more of him than anyone else.

"I knew your mother twenty-five years ago," she said to him one day. "She was a beautiful girl. No, you have not a look of her. One wonders sometimes why the beauty of the mothers is so seldom visited on the children."

"I do not remember my mother, but I have a picture of her. If you will wait here, I will bring it."

"You are an artist," she said, decisively.

"Only an attempt at one," with a faint smile of self-depreciation. "I shall never achieve success."

"Because you have the Shaw blood in you—the laziest life-current that ever flowed."

"Thank you. I'm afraid it is true."

"Will you take an order from me? I have a

niece—a pretty girl, but she never gets a respectable picture. I am going to take home with me a party of young people. I want you to join them, and I want this portrait painted without regular sittings—without her knowledge, in fact."

"Yes, I will come."

"You will have to work, you know. You are to choose your own studio, and I will engage to answer all questions that may be asked."

Afterward he reflected that he did not even know where Mrs. Wood made her home. She was a motherly old lady, something positive and dictatorial in her ways, but they were all kindly ones.

One day, when his portmanteau was packed ready for the train, Frank Colburn came into his room.

"So you are going. You've had enough of the salt-sea sands."

"I am going—yes. To Mrs. Wood's. You are not of the party?"

"I am not of the party," with a little grimace.

"There is an old proverb about the burnt child, you know."

Shaw looked up quickly.

"There is a blaze to be dreaded, then?"

"A blaze? No. A clear, pure, steady flame that one would think too cold to make anyone suffer. But I did confoundedly," with a laugh not in the least mirthful.

"Coquette?"

"No," flushing hotly. "I don't say it myself, nor allow others if I can help it. It is the manifest destiny of the woman, I suppose, and of us."

"And all this happened at—"

"Shell Harbour. I was there fishing one summer."

"That is Mrs. Wood's home. Good-bye, and be warned—only no one ever is."

At sunset once more the steamer swung up the beautiful harbour, and Lawrence Shaw saw the same groups, it seemed to him, waiting on the pier.

He had done a little hard thinking on his way.

His friend's warning weighed nothing. Painting a woman's portrait, nine times out of ten, was sufficient disenchantment.

And then, foremost among all the others, in an elegant open carriage, sat Helen Phillips, and as they filed down the plank the coachman touched his hat to Mrs. Wood.

"Miss Phillips is waiting."

"Ah, Roger. These young people will want all the accommodation you have arranged for them."

Shaw heard it, and his head turned dizzily. The next minute Miss Phillips stood in the midst of their group, most of whom had known her before.

"Helen, this is a new protégé of mine—Mr. Shaw—mine own especial property, subject to my command alone."

"Mr. Shaw and I are not quite strangers, auntie. I have a prior claim, if a very slight one, of him."

And Shaw could only bow over the gloved hand, as speechless as in that other meeting, raging at himself that all his smooth sayings had escaped him.

"The town is very full this year?"

"Yes, it is growing quite the fashion. It needs fashion to reconcile people to the fogs, and the rest of it, through these two months."

"I do not dislike the fogs," she said, quietly. "I believe it is the people, for the most part, to whom I object. That's an atrocious sentiment," smiling up at him.

"Not at all. We are rather an objectionable lot, I believe."

"Perhaps it is they who object to me," rather gravely. "There's an objection, at all events. I believe I have a rather uncomfortable reputation as being strong minded, and the rest of it."

"I shouldn't have thought it," with an expression that brought a frank laugh rippling up to her lips. After that he was more at his ease.

They found Mrs. Wood waiting on her own porch to receive them.

"Just fifteen minutes grace before the teahell. I am a terrible despot in my own domains," she said.

They gathered about a delicious informal meal at the end of the quarter hour.

Through the gay little tumult Miss Phillips, from her end of the table, sent her bright speeches here and there. Shaw watched her intently.

He was early astir the next morning. He had passed a restless night, and was not disposed to prolong its experience.

He took a long walk to the shore of the harbour, and came back to find himself late to breakfast.

"Nobody is waited for here, sir," Mrs. Wood said, with laughing peremptoriness.

"You should have had coffee, though," Miss Phillips said, reassuringly. "I sympathise with all tardy souls. The dread of every day of my life is the beginning of the next one."

Miss Vernet was awaiting him in a shady corner of the porch after breakfast. She was small and dark and vivacious. The two were always engaged in a gay interchange of talk that was at times antagonistic.

Under the girl's brightness lay a drop of bitterness—an envious core to all friendships that spoiled their flavour.

"How do you like her? You have been watching her ever since you came."

"That is the artist's privilege."

"Don't defend yourself. You have the right in common with all other men. You did not answer my question."

"I consider her the most beautiful woman I ever met," pointedly.

"You will not refuse to paint her picture, perhaps?" letting pique get the better of good sense.

"Perhaps not—when she asks me," politely enough, but with a meaning under it.

Miss Vernet restrained her tongue by an effort of the will that was heroic. She laughed lightly.

"Miss Phillips—Helen—is my friend, but I can't help seeing her foibles. Take the warning of a woman who knows, and forearm yourself."

"I have been forewarned enough, certainly. Do be explicit."

"For you, I will. She was in love once, so many years ago that one does not specify the exact period. She mistook her hero, or he his heroine, and since then she has been playing the part of *'la belle dame sans merci'*. She prides herself on her cold-blooded indifference to society and the conquests she makes of men who put themselves in her way. Mind, she never lifts a finger towards that end, and she is always surprised and grieved at what happens. Not the less it always happens. Ask Frank Colburn, Fred Oram, or Harry Graves what they think of her."

At lunch Mrs. Wood forestalled all questioning.

"Mr. Shaw is my sworn cavalier. He is to paint a picture for me, and not a soul of you is to ask him or me a question about it till it is done. Perhaps you will be allowed to see it then—perhaps not."

Helen Phillips' look of surprise was so genuine that no one could doubt its reality. There was a laughing series of jokes round the table, and then the matter was dropped because Mrs. Wood was so evidently in earnest.

There was to be a sailing party the next day, a picnic, and a coming home by moonlight. Shaw joined the others.

As everywhere, he was the central favourite of the group.

He was quite at the other end of the boat from Miss Phillips, talking lazy nonsense to Grace Jordan.

"Look at her," Grace said, suddenly. "Don't you think she is the most picturesque person you ever saw? What is she now?"

Helen Phillips was leaning over the side of the boat, drawing her hand through the green ripples of the sunlit water.

"Undine," he answered, promptly.

"Undine with a soul, then," Miss Jordan said.

"a soul that makes us all feel dwarfed and out of place beside her."

Miss Phillips looked straight at them, wiping her wet hand and wrist with her handkerchief. Miss Jordan blushed. Shaw knew he looked guilty.

While lunch was being arranged he wandered away from the rest. He liked the salt solitariness, the hushing rustle of the wind and voices of the waves.

Behind a great wave-washed boulder sat Helen Phillips, her eyes out at sea, bareheaded, her hands in her lap, and her face sad and prophetic.

He made some kind of apology, and was turning away.

She recalled him.

"Mr. Shaw, nobody wants you more than I. Do you think you ought to discuss me in my own house?"

He was thunderstruck, as most men would have been.

"Do you believe what they tell you?" Helen asked.

"Partly," he answered, taking his courage by both hands.

"Suspend judgment till you know me. You are making a study of me, you know—you came here for that."

"Shall I go away?" he stammered, forgetting himself.

"No, not because I know it. I am glad if it amuses you, but I wish you would do me some slight justice."

Her face was weary enough now with no attempt at concealment. He sat down beside her deliberately.

"Tell me how you knew."

"How could I help knowing? I don't know why. Are you going to revenge somebody? Is it just curiosity? Dr. Clare is my good friend. He has told me of you. I should like to have you also for a friend."

"You shall," he said, heartily. "It is not curiosity? I will explain some time. I haven't the least desire to revenge anybody. The most of my acquaintances are not worth the trouble. Excepting always John Clare, and he does not need my good offices."

"He is to be married next month."

"Yes, I am to be his 'best man.'"

"Then you know Miss Abbott. Tell me about her."

And so they drifted into commonplace, friendly talk, and came back to the others, like a number of other pairs of people, when the table was ready.

His work went on day after day for a week or more.

His picture grew; he spent every available hour over it.

A beautiful, noble face and figure was growing under his brush, and he came out from his solitary endeavours to find his vision realised before his eyes with not a faulty outline nor defective tint.

One morning, running up the last flight of stairs two steps at a time, Miss Phillips met him on the upper landing.

"Don't you think," she said, sweetly, "that you would find your work easier if I were to give you sittings?"

He put his hand to his pocket where he kept the key of his room.

"No, I have not been in. But you and aunt are very transparent deceivers. I have almost known these three days—I am quite sure now, Mr. Shaw."

He replied by throwing open the door and inviting her to enter.

She stood silent before the canvas till he grew nervous.

"You do not like it?" he said.

"Aunt will like it. I suppose it is for her. Do I look like that to you?"

"Very like," with a tone in his voice that startled himself. "I shall not change the expression if you sit, but I should like your head and shoulders before me."

After that, every day for an hour she came and sat patiently as he directed. They did not talk much.

He was too intent on his work. It seemed to him as it went on that his heart went more and more into his pencil.

He knew he was doing better work than ever before.

Helen Phillips was silent for the most part, but quite frank and unconventional when she did speak, and he studied tint and outline till they reproduced themselves through his dreams.

I am afraid that Lawrence Shaw was enjoying this episode in his life with a pleasure that had its unconscious relish of unlawfulness. There was a reason.

If he had stopped to recognise it of course he would have done the prudent thing, and fled from all approach of danger.

But in his artist's capacity—and Mrs. Wood had the right to claim something from the son of her old friend, and, of course, to make a satisfactory picture he must learn the secret of his subject's changing expression, and so he stayed on, and looked neither before him nor after.

One rainy day, when a storm was sobbing and wailing about the house, he had gone up to his easel as usual.

As he sat there listless and idle he heard through the half-open door the sweeping rustle of her garments and her light, quick footfall along the corridor.

"I did not know that you would be at work in this light. I can give you only half an hour to-day," settling into her accustomed place.

He took up his brushes moodily. The girl had an artist's instincts herself. She had draped herself in dusky red, and the grey light did not matter much.

For fifteen minutes of absolute silence he wrought on. Then, looking up at her, he flung down his pallet with an expression of impetuous disgust.

That faint characteristic smile dawned round her lips.

"What an idiot I am. I might have hoped to make some approach to what people call a likeness. As it is, I might have painted a doll, for anything there is like you in it."

"I am sorry," deprecatingly.

"You—sorry," going on with his impatient utterance. "What fault is it of yours, except that you have a face that shadows every heart-beat?"

"Your friends will tell you that I have no heart."

"Have you not?" turning suddenly.

She clasped and unclasped her hands with a sudden nervous motion.

"I had once," all her face drooping down into a tender sadness. "It isn't a very different story from other women's, and—I don't want it in my picture. I like the other character best."

"Tell me," turning to her impulsively.

"There is nothing to tell. I have been very unhappy, and—I am neither unhappy nor happy now. Pardon me, Mr. Shaw," rising; "believe me, I do not intrude personal experiences very often."

She went out of the room. He sat down again dumb and idle. An impulse that had rushed over him with her last words had roused in him a sense of what their mutual relations might become.

Shaw was an honourable man, not with any artificial or educated sense of that inexplicable standard, but with a real intense appreciation of his obligations to himself.

Miss Phillips was with her guests, looking neither bored nor languid. The Lady Geraldine was entertaining the visitors of the house with perfect gracious courtesy.

Show found himself in the outer circle at once when he approached her. And from that position he retired with all speed, going off by himself to think over affairs, and taking half an hour to arrive at a conclusion that he was behaving like an idiot.

Frank Colburn's warning came back to him. Frank had found her sweet, if hopelessly out of his reach. So had other men. If now he was to speak and think of her from their standpoint, would he look at her with eyes different from

theirs? He did no more work that day, but the next morning's early sunshine found him in his place again.

Miss Phillips came as usual for her sitting. He talked this morning; he felt that that old silence had too many magnetic possibilities of misunderstanding in it. Being a gentleman with brains, he talked well, and with not too evident a betrayal of his purpose. He looked up once to find an expression of puzzled questioning in the steady blue eyes, and knew that a flush ran over his own face.

"I shall not need to trouble you many times more. You have been very good."

"I have liked it," she said, quietly. "The face is finished?"

"No; but," looking straight forward, "I am painting her ladyship. You like the other better—so do I."

"Yes," with the slightest change in her voice; "it is much better—much the more natural of the two. Aunt will be for ever obliged. This is all for this morning?"

He bowed. She lingered an instant, as if there were other words on his lips, then went on. She crossed the threshold of the room but once more.

It was only the next day that Miss Vernet, in a dress of purple and orange that gave her dark beauty a piquant emphasis, captured him alone in the shady garden walks. The word occurred to him, she seized him with such emphasis.

"One never gets a word with you now-a-days. Hardly a sight of you."

"Do you really care for the sight, bella donna?"

"Of course. Are you not our one celebrity? The rest are simply gentlemen. Why am I bella donna?"

"Didn't your mirror tell you when your toilet was finished?" pulling a long vine-wreath from the rocks to which it clung. "Beautiful lady," as he threw it over her shoulders.

"It is nightshade," pouting.

"Well, is it any the less beautiful?"

"It is poisonous."

"But still beautiful."

"And it belongs to me?" lifting her long-lashed eyes to his.

"Perfectly. I, Lawrence Shaw, tell you so. You would make an exquisite picture for some tastes, just as you are."

A little wistful smile ran over her face.

"They say," not minding him, "these others, that Helen Phillips has bewitched you—that you are going as others go."

"These others," taking her two hands in his and crushing them with the same impulse that would have made him knock a man down, "these others speak falsely."

She recoiled with a little cry. He held her hands, still looking into her eyes with an expression in his own not tender, to say the least, when, tall and cool and white, Miss Phillips came across the lawn, and half stopped at sight of them.

Miss Vernet broke away and ran to the house past Helen, who looked straight before her and did not speak.

Shaw went to her. He was flushed, and his anger ebbing, left him shame-faced. It looked like embarrassment. Miss Phillips was pale.

"Of what are you women made?" he said, harshly.

A ghost of a pallid smile ran over her face.

"The subject is a wide one," she said. "We cannot discuss it, we who are interested."

They passed down the walk side by side, with no more speech. At the end a group of elms swayed their heavy branches. She paused in the sun-flecked shadow.

"Tell me," her lips pale—"it is an unconventional question—do you love her, Clara Vernet?"

"Love her?" with explosive astonishment. "I swear to you, no!"

A sigh fluttered over her lips. She turned towards the house again.

"I do not understand you," he said, half-despairingly.

"I suppose not. We are not easily understood, you said, just now."

He went up to his workroom and shut himself in. The almost completed picture on his easel was just now quite as much companionship as he wanted, more perhaps than he would have chosen, but it was the only place where he could be quite sure that his trouble and disgust with himself could show itself in his face without risk of being seen.

They were out for a sailing excursion that night. Somebody asked Miss Phillips to sing, and she complied. Her voice was neither sweet nor rich, but it was strong and flexible. And she sang an old, quaint hymn, with tune and words somehow welded together with a fitness that made its impression on the least sensitive. Miss Vernet sat next Shaw. He felt her tremble, and saw her draw her wraps closer about her.

"Sing the 'Three Fishers,'" a voice said, and Miss Phillips sang.

"Three corpses laid out on the shining sand," Miss Vernet repeated. "Horrid! How I hate that! Can you swim, Mr. Shaw?"

"No," he said, quietly.

"Then I shall change my seat. I want to put myself near someone who can. I'm deadly afraid of the water."

She rose to change her place. Just then a flaw struck the boat; the sail swung round—struck her. Shaw sprang to save her, lost his own balance, and half stunned by the blow he had received, felt himself sinking in a dark coolness, and saw the lights go out over him.

Miss Phillips was half the boat length away. No one knew how it happened that when the confusion on board was quieted, and the inexperienced sailors could think what was to be done next, she, too, was gone from her place.

Shaw had sense enough to keep from struggling. When he came up hands seized him, a woman's garments streamed into his grasp.

"I can keep you afloat," Helen Phillips said, "or I can sink with you."

He saw her face white and desperate. The boat had forged ahead; they seemed to be alone in that weltering chilly dimness. It seemed as if they waited there an age. Every little wave went over his head. Her strength was failing evidently.

"Helen," he said, quietly, "save yourself. There is no need that both should die. I don't think I shall go down, but if I do, you have done all you could."

"I love you," she said, tightening her hold on his hands.

Five minutes after they were lifted into the midst of a frightened, half-hysterical group. And they both appeared at breakfast next day with no traces about them of what had so nearly happened, except that Shaw was silent and Miss Phillips very pale.

Between them they managed to hush over much talk about what had occurred. What private comments might be made did not concern them. Both were dreading the time when they should stand face to face with each other; and their memories of the words that had spoken themselves through her lips.

Mrs. Wood made an announcement before the meal was finished:

"I expect an arrival to-day. A young friend unexpectedly home from the Continent is coming to me for a few days till she can perfect some business arrangements. Perhaps you know her, Jennie Valentine."

For a minute Shaw realised how women feel when they faint. He looked up to catch a flash and mocking smile from Clara Vernet, and caught his breath again.

He sauntered out, the meal being over, meaning to escape to the shore. But a group on the croquet-ground stopped him. Miss Vernet's ringing voice sounded clear.

He has been sailing under false colours. Let's ignore him. We've been risking our hearts to an engaged man, girls! I had it by letter from someone who knows, this morning, and she is

coming to prove ownership, and take her property away."

It was like Clara Vernet's small revenge. He saw Helen Phillips's face grow ghastly white. She could not manage her colour, but she could and did her voice and lips that spoke the pretty speech that neutralised the insult. She came into his painting room that afternoon. His work was done, except some minor touches that could be given at any time.

"Is it true this that I have heard?"

"It is true."

"And you love her?"

"I love her," turning his face away.

"I am very glad," quietly. "Whatever I have been, you are not untrue to yourself. Good-bye."

He rose and took her hands. His lips trembled so that he could not speak for a minute. Then he said:

"Forgive me," huskily.

She bent forward and kissed his forehead, and so went away.

Miss Phillips herself drove to the boat that night to receive and welcome Miss Valentine—a lovely little brunette, who in the next ten days fell completely in love with her young hostess.

But at the time of the wedding in the fall Helen was abroad, in spite of Jennie's tearful protestations.

Mrs. Wood is more than satisfied with her niece's picture. Mrs. Shaw has never guessed at any past relation between her friend and husband, except that of friendly interest on one side, and loyal, tender admiration—which she shared—on the other. And perhaps the two—meeting daily, and never consciously looking back at the dead summer—have learned to feel that all the past belongs to ghosts who can in no wise touch the living human interests of their present. K. R.

FACETIE.

ON DANGEROUS GROUND.

ARCHIE: "Auntie, what's a torpedo?"

AUNTIE: "Something that blows something up, my love."

ARCHIE: "Then are you a torpedo, Auntie?"

AUNTIE: "No, my dear. Why?"

ARCHIE: "Because I heard uncle telling pa you were always blowing him up." —Judy.

AFTER A MOUSE.

I WAS quietly reading my newspaper yesterday when I heard a scream like the whistle of a locomotive.

It came from the dining-room.

I rushed in to see what was the matter, and found my wife standing upon a chair, with her skirts drawn tight round her ankles.

"It's a mouse!" she cried, wildly.

"Where?" I demanded.

"There—here—no—yes—I don't know! Oh, for pity's sake, kill it! Kill it!"

"Where is it?" I asked again. "There is no mouse here."

"Yes, there is, you old idiot! Don't you see it? There—somewhere—anywhere—everywhere—I don't know where! Why don't you kill it?"

Mrs. B. isn't fond of mice.

She would rather have burglars about the house than a single mouse.

The sight of one makes the very hairpins drop out of her head.

"Madame," said I, with awful calmness, "tell me where that diminutive rodent mammal is, or for ever hold your peace."

"It is in the cupboard," she gasped. "I saw it run under the cupboard door."

I walked to the cupboard with the tread of a gladiator.

I opened it.

Before I could get my eyes in range to look for the mouse it jumped out, and ran right over my foot.

I gave an awful kick—a tremendous, heart-rending kick.

My foot went clear up to the top of the cupboard, and the back of my head struck the floor so hard that I saw all the planets and comets that were ever invented.

I picked myself up, and looked wildly around for the mouse.

"There it is!" shrieked Mrs. B. "There—there! Quick!"

"Where?" I roared.

"Under the table!"

I sprang to the table, seized one end of it, and gave it a jerk that brought it to the middle of the room.

The mouse scampered.

I saw him running around the room, and plunged after.

I tried my best to step on him.

I only succeeded in stepping on a spool of thread, which my wife had dropped in her excitement.

The spool rolled, and before I had time to shut my eyes I found myself standing on my shoulders, gazing curiously up at my feet, which were trying to scrape a picture of Benjamin Franklin off the wall.

As soon as I got on my legs again I made another bolt for the mouse.

I saw it whizzing across the floor.

I bounded towards it, and gave one furious kick.

And kicked the table!

Then I grabbed myself up, and carried myself around the room on one foot, howling like a wolf, and calling for corn salve, till I heard my wife screaming.

"Don't let it get away, you idiot! Get something and kill it!"

I was desperate.

I snatched the first thing I could lay my hands on.

It happened to be a base-ball bat belonging to Lot.

I made one murderous sweep.

But instead of killing the mouse I upset the chair on which my wife was standing, and the result was that she turned a very graceful somersault over against the pantry door.

She screamed for help, and declared the mouse was eating her up.

She refused to be comforted till I had placed her on her chair again.

Then she didn't have breath enough left to call me a brute, though she tried till she was black in the face.

By this time I was thoroughly excited, but I knew I must try another kind of weapon.

I saw something on the table, and I made a grab for it.

It proved to be a warm apple pie, but I didn't know it at the time.

I thought I saw the mouse running up the wall.

I hurled the pie at it.

But at that moment my daughter opened the door.

She walked into the dining-room, and the pie struck her in the face.

And Lot, attracted by the noise, came rushing in, just in time to get hit in the mouth with a loaf of bread, which I frantically flung at the mouse.

But the mouse darted through the open door, and escaped into the next room.

We all followed it, pell-mell.

The little quadruped took refuge in the clothes-press, and my wife, who, by this time, had got up a little courage, seized the shovel, and cried out:

"You open the door, and I'll kill him as he comes out!"

We planted ourselves in position, and when Mrs. B. gave the word I threw open the clothes-press door.

I saw the mouse in an instant. It had climbed upon a shelf, and was sitting there on a level with my eyes.

"There it is!" I bawled; "hit it quick! It's going to jump over the heads—"

Before I could utter another syllable, the end of the earth struck me.

A billion stars danced before my eyes, and as I slowly gathered myself up out of the corner, I began to realise that Mrs. B., in aiming a blow at the mouse, had hit me on the back of the head with the fire-shovel.

LONGEVITY.

We have not degenerated physically. It is a mistaken notion that modern times do not produce so many specimens of physical hardihood and strength as the good old times whose praises are sung by thoughtless bards. We, perhaps, have many more persons of feeble constitutions, since, owing to improvements in medical science and modes of life, thousands are now reared who would have sunk under the rigorous circumstances of former days. The average length of human life is considerably longer now than in earlier and less civilised periods.

THE BARE FEET ON THE STAIR.

THE children think they're whispering

So very soft and low,

That none will waken, as they pass

To reach the room below.

The little, careless children,

A-groping down the stair,

I know, by the soft, mouse-like tread,

Their tiny feet are bare.

I hear their white robes trailing,

All through the dusky hall,

Like little birds they're nestling

In bed, e'er I can call.

I go to them, I hide them,

That through the wintry air,

In grey of early morning,

They stole a-down the stair.

They could not wait, they tell me,

For in the room below,

The tiny socks were hanging—

The Christmas socks, a-row!

And shivering through the darkness,

With stealthy, mouse-like tread,

They went; and unseen treasures

Bore back with them to bed.

I heard them laugh and whisper,

They wondered, and they guessed,

While groping, with cold fingers,

What golden treasures rest

In hidden depths. Oh, children,

"Guess" what the stockings hold,

Your fancy makes all precious

As gleaming gems, or gold.

And yet, 'tis more than fancy.

The touch of love is shown

In every gift, that slowly

Beneath our hands have grown.

How glad they seem and noisy!

And through the grey of morn,

Their silvery, rippling laughter

Through all the house is borne.

Oh, hours of sweet rejoicing!

Oh, home, how pure and dear!

Thy Christmas song and laughter

More precious is, each year.

Because a deeper meaning

Runs through the songs we lift;

Because we type more truly

God's giving, in each gift.

A. S.

GEMS.

DESPISE no one; for everyone knows something which thou knowest not.

SOME get so inebriated with their special regard that they mistake "moonshine" for sun's rays.

POVERTY and pride are inconvenient com-

panions; but when idleness unites with them, the depth of wretchedness is attained.

THERE is hardly any bodily blemish which a winning behaviour will not conceal, and make tolerable; and there is no external grace which ill nature will not deform.

How many young men are carried away by a fine, musical, charming voice—a pretty, light footed, reeling, ball-room dancer—a lazy, lounging, street-yarning flirt—an oily-tongued, hollow-hearted, deceptive piano-pounder, and regret their folly when, alas, too late.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

FRUSTRATE.—White of an egg, six heaping tablespoonfuls powdered sugar, one teaspoonful lemon juice; beat one spoonful of sugar with white three minutes; then another, and so on; lastly, add lemon-juice, and beat until the froth stands up stiff, and can be cut with a knife.

HOUSE PESTS.—All sorts of insects can be destroyed by using hot alum water. It will destroy red and black ants, cockroaches, spiders, chinch-bugs, and all the crawling pests which infest our houses. Take two pounds of alum and dissolve it in three or four quarts of boiling water; let it stand on the fire till the alum disappears; then apply it with a brush, while nearly boiling hot, to every joint and crevice in your closets, pantry shelves, bedsteads, and the like. Brush the crevices in the floor of the skirting or mop boards, if you suspect that they harbour vermin. If, in whitewashing a ceiling, plenty of alum is added to the lime, it will also serve to keep insects at a distance. Cockroaches will flee the paint which has been washed in cool alum water.

INDIAN GRIDDLE CAKES.—Two cupfuls white corn-meal, one cupful flour, one-half cupful yeast, one teaspoonful salt; milk added to make a stiff batter; put in a warm place to rise over night as sponge for bread.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ABOUT this time last year a sale of sealskins took place in the City, and the sales in about an hour and a half realised £170,000. Recently a similar sale was held at the Commercial Sale Rooms, Mincing Lane, and about the same quantity of furs sold for £250,000—nearly half as much again as they fetched twelve months ago.

THE Duke of Connaught will be appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland as soon after his marriage as an opportunity occurs to provide for the Duke of Marlborough.

AT a meeting of London cabmen the other day some curious facts were stated. In London there are 19,900 cabmen, and among them there are men who have been lawyers, clergymen, and doctors, and there is one who has a right to the title of "lord." What custom he would get if he were known! It would be touching hate to him, and "Oblige me, my lord, by condescending, my lord, to take five shillings, my lord, instead of a shilling, my lord, which is your lordship's legal fare."

DR. CREVAUX, when last heard of (September 3d), had proceeded a considerable distance up the Oyapok. He felt confident of being able to trace that river to its source, and, having done so, proposed to cross the watershed, and to follow the Paru or some other river to the Amazon.

THE Pekin "Official Gazette" publishes a communication from a learned Chinese, who demonstrates—at least to his own satisfaction—that the "far-speaking tube" (the Telephone) was already known about A.D. 962, and was the invention of an inhabitant of Pekin.

THE Rev. Henry Ward Beecher has just signed a contract for fifty lectures for 5,000 pounds and expenses paid, to be delivered in England, Scotland and Ireland.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

JOHNETT.—Order the recognised local paper from any newsagent.

EUFEM M.—Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Russia in 1812. Count Segar's little book, now, however, long out of print, gives a vivid description of that terrible expedition.

B. A.—Litigation or disputes of so delicately domestic a nature are really very wrong and ought to be carefully avoided.

ADA.—We should think that any hairdresser would readily inform you.

HAUNTED.—Your effort is of the juvenile order, but it shows an ear for melody, and by practice and close study you would in time produce something up to the proper standard.

A. M.—I. Whether a servant can claim her wages on being discharged without notice depends upon circumstances. You do not give details. 2. A master is not bound to give a character.

LOST & WON.—Cannot say till we see how received. State terms.

A CONSTANT READER.—French can be learnt without a master, but its pronunciation never. There are standard elementary books, which any bookseller will obtain for you.

EXPECTANT.—By pencil drawings. Drawing is of course the principal but not the only qualification. We cannot give you the average salaries.

F. W. N.—Write to Mr. Kent, bookseller, Paternoster Row, London, who will doubtless forward you a book on canaries. The price would be about one shilling and sixpence. Enclose stamps.

RUBY.—Either phrase would be correct, but "sweet seventeen" is the received expression.

S. W.—Any time within twelve months.

S. S.—About £20.

JENNIE.—The lines cited by Dr. Kenealy, in the Tichborne trial:

"Oh, woman, in our hour of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light, quivering aspen made;
But when affliction wrings the brow
A ministering angel thou."

occur in the 4th Canto of Sir Walter's Scott's magnificent poem of Marmion (The Battle).

L. S.—The battle of Waterloo was fought 18th of June, 1815.

POLITICIAN.—Sir Francis Burdett was sentenced to three months imprisonment and fined £2,000 for a letter addressed to his constituents on the Peterloo Massacre at Manchester Feb. 8, 1821. This eminent and patriotic man was the father of the present truly noble Baroness Burdett-Coutts.

C. G.—You will certainly have to pay the usual legacy duties, and we presume that your legal adviser was quite right.

ELF.—A decoction of elder-flowers would be found of service.

DAVID W.—The price of Sir Walter Scott's novels extends from sixpence each novel up to several shillings, according to the edition you may select. Apply to any bookseller.

ZARER.—It would be actually necessary to consult a duly qualified practitioner. If you reflect you will see that your question is by far too delicate for discussion in our columns.

ALICE.—Elder-down is obtained from the nest of the elder.

SAILOR.—The Bosphorus is sixteen miles in length, the Dardanelles about fifty.

W.—In such a case the master could certainly send him to prison.

JIM.—The noble was an ancient British coin of the value of 6s. 8d. It was first struck in the reign of Edward III., and being stamped with a rose was called the rose noble.

LILY.—Violets are supposed to symbolise the Bonapartist Imperialism.

TED.—Your critics were probably playing a joke upon you.

FLORENCE, DAISY, and MARIE, three friends, would like to correspond with three young gentlemen. Florence is eighteen, dark, hazel eyes, tall. Daisy is eighteen, light brown hair, blue eyes, medium height, good-looking. Marie is seventeen, dark hair and eyes, domesticated.

MARY and LIZZIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. Mary is twenty-two, good-looking, tall. Lizzie is twenty-one, fair, fond of home and children. Respondents must be about twenty-four, fond of home.

FRED twenty-four, dark, tall, would like to correspond with a young lady about twenty.

W. A. E. and G. M., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies (domestic servants). W. A. E. is twenty-seven, tall, brown hair, dark blue eyes, fond of home. G. M. is twenty-eight, medium height, light blue eyes.

LOUIE and ELLA, sisters, wish to correspond with two gentlemen. Louie is nineteen, dark. Ella is eighteen, brown hair and eyes.

CASSY and CARRIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men with a view to matrimony. Cassy is nineteen, tall, dark hair and eyes. Carrie is nineteen, medium height, fair, blue eyes. Respondents must be fond of home and music.

FAITHFUL and CONSTANT, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Faithful is twenty-four, dark, blue eyes, fond of home. Constant is twenty-five, fair, of a loving disposition, tall. Must be fond of music.

KATE, twenty-two, medium height, fond of home, dark, thoroughly domesticated, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty-five, good-tempered, and fond of home.

H. T. and C. R., friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. H. T. is twenty-five, medium height, dark. C. R. is twenty-two, tall.

AUTUMN PLANTING.

In the warm brown mould I leave thee,
Lily of the valley fair,
Bulb of pearl with wondrous foldings,
Moulded by the Father's care.

Rootlets, fine as fairy weaving
Elfin cables, hold thee fast,
Till the counted moons are ended,
And the waiting winter past.

Now, a dusty leafy banner
Only, lifts its weary head
In the smothering of September,
Like a bearse-plume o'er the dead.

Tattered by the winds unkindly,
By the chill autumnal rain;
Can it be, oh! valley lily,
Thou shalt speak to me again?

Yes, I look beyond the winter,
Lily of the valley sweet,
Where, through tiny scrolls rolled deftly
Piercing clefts mould to my feet.

Soon I'll hear thee, softly calling
While my pulses gladly leap,
"I have kept my trust, oh, mortal,
I have wakened out of sleep."

Then I'll see, by time unfolded
From thy soft and satin palm,
Bells of silver tuned to echoes
Of the swelling floral psalm.

Thus I plant with thee, oh, lily,
Full assurance, hope and trust,
And like my Master, with a finger
Write His promise in the dust.

E. L.

EDITH and LOUIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Edith is twenty-four, fair, medium height, domesticated. Louie is eighteen, dark, fond of home and children. Respondents must be tall, of loving dispositions.

G. L. and J. K., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. G. L. is twenty-three, medium height. J. K. is twenty, tall. Respondents must be fond of music and dancing, good-looking.

FAITHFUL, twenty-three, blue eyes, would like to correspond with a young lady. One living in the country preferred.

JACK and JIMMY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Jack is twenty-three, dark hair, blue eyes, fond of home. Jimmy is twenty, fond of music and dancing, dark hair and eyes, good-tempered.

F. D. and T. F., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. F. D. is twenty-two, dark, tall, dark hair and eyes. T. F. is twenty-two, brown hair, blue eyes, fond of home. Respondents must be twenty, loving.

S. G., twenty-two, medium height, dark hair, hazel eyes, fond of home, wishes to correspond with a young man about twenty-six, medium height, good-looking, fond of home.

M. D. and B. H., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. M. D. is twenty-one, fair, brown hair, blue eyes, good-tempered. B. H. is seventeen, dark brown hair, blue eyes, medium height, of a loving disposition.

CAROLINE, twenty-two, fond of home and children, loving, golden hair, blue eyes, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty-four, dark hair, brown eyes, good-looking, medium height, fond of home and children.

MILLICENT, twenty-six, thoroughly domesticated, fond of home and children, would like to correspond with a young man about thirty.

P. F. and H. C., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. P. F. is twenty-four, handsome, dark. H. C. is fair, blue eyes, good-tempered.

B. C. T., twenty-two, dark hair and eyes, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony.

GHERBUDE, eighteen, dark hair and eyes, of medium height, would like to correspond with a gentleman with a view to matrimony.

POLLY, eighteen, brown hair, blue eyes, loving, of medium height, would like to correspond with a young man with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be about twenty, fond of home.

BLANCHE S., twenty, dark, light brown hair, grey eyes, medium height, fond of home and children, wishes to correspond with a young man about the same age, fair, fond of home.

TOMMY, twenty-three, fair, good-looking, fond of home and children, would like to correspond with a fair, loving young lady.

G. P., twenty, dark hair, hazel eyes, medium height, would like to correspond with a seaman in the Royal Navy.

ANNIE and GRACE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men with a view to matrimony. Annie is seventeen, dark, handsome. Grace is nineteen, loving, dark.

WALLACE, nineteen, would like to correspond with a young lady about the same age with a view to matrimony.

W. S., twenty-two, fair, dark blue eyes, tall, domesticated, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony. Must be twenty-five, dark hair and eyes.

NELLIE and LILY, two friends, would like to correspond with two good-looking young gentlemen. Nellie is nineteen, brown hair, hazel eyes, thoroughly domesticated, fond of music. Lily is eighteen, medium height, brown hair, blue eyes, fond of children, of a loving disposition, good-tempered.

FRED J., twenty-one, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a young lady about the same age.

JANET, twenty-one, auburn hair, grey eyes, fair, good-looking, of a loving disposition, and fond of home, would like to correspond with a young gentleman about the same age.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

IDA is responded to by—J. G., twenty-three, medium height, fond of home.

EDITH by—W. S. J., twenty-three, fair, of a loving disposition.

MAGGIE by—W. M. C., twenty-one, fond of home and children.

EMILY by—A. A. R., twenty, tall, hazel eyes, fond of music and dancing.

H. T. by—T. B., twenty-two, blue eyes, fond of home, fair.

ELIZABETH W. by—E. L., twenty-three, good-looking, auburn hair, blue eyes.

MARGUERITE C. by—J. E., twenty-four, dark hair and eyes, medium height.

ROSE by—Samuel, brown hair, blue eyes.

J. G. by—Edith, fond of music, fair, domesticated.

C. D. by—Helen, black hair, medium height, domesticated.

EMILIE by—G. H. W., eighteen, good-looking, fond of home, of a loving disposition.

MARK by—S. P., twenty-two, brown hair and eyes, of a loving disposition, medium height, fond of children.

LAURA CONSTANCE by—G. B., twenty, tall, good-looking.

S. G. by—Clara, twenty-two, brown hair, dark blue eyes.

BEATON by—T. J. L., good-looking, dark hair and eyes, of a loving disposition, fond of music.

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